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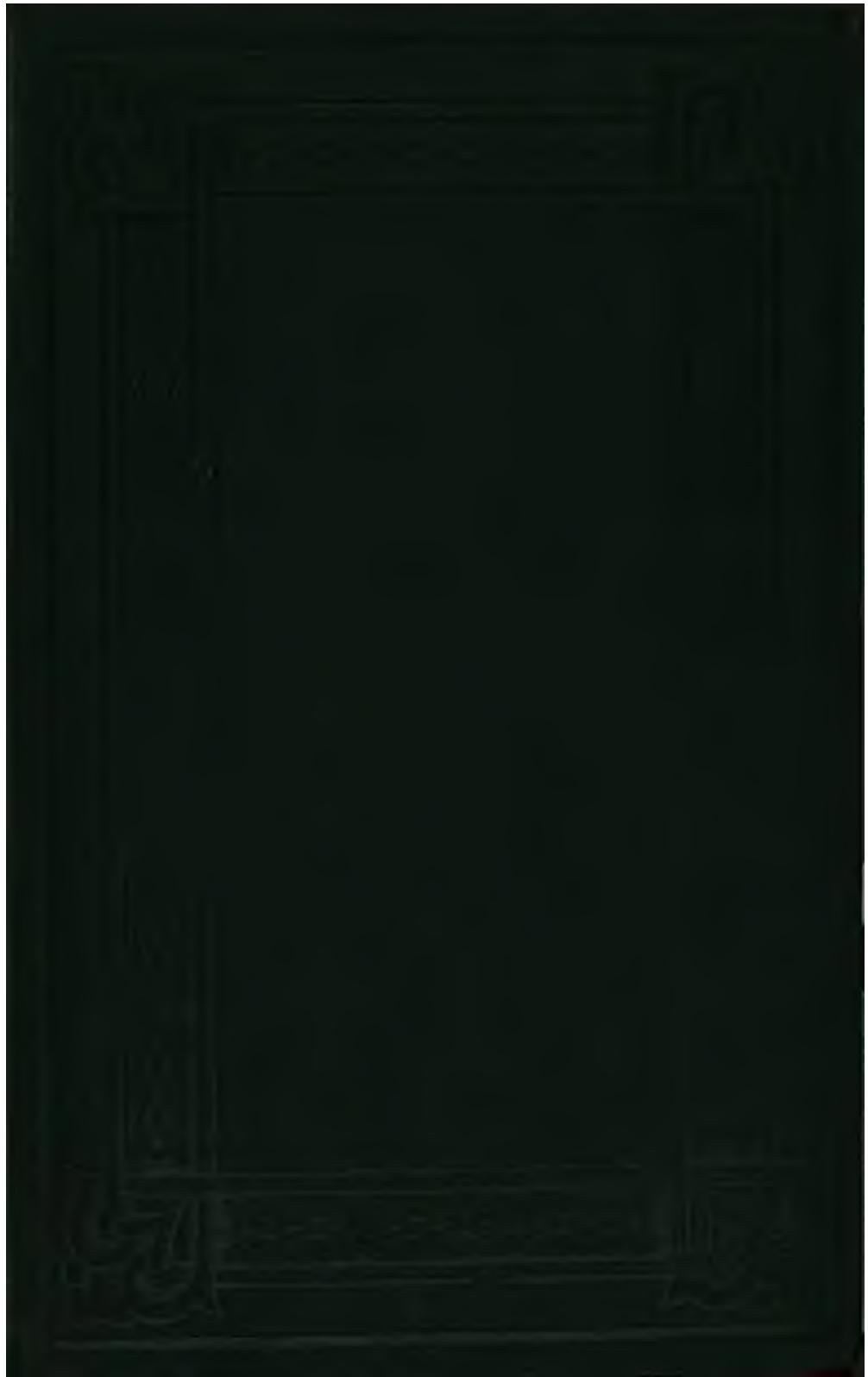
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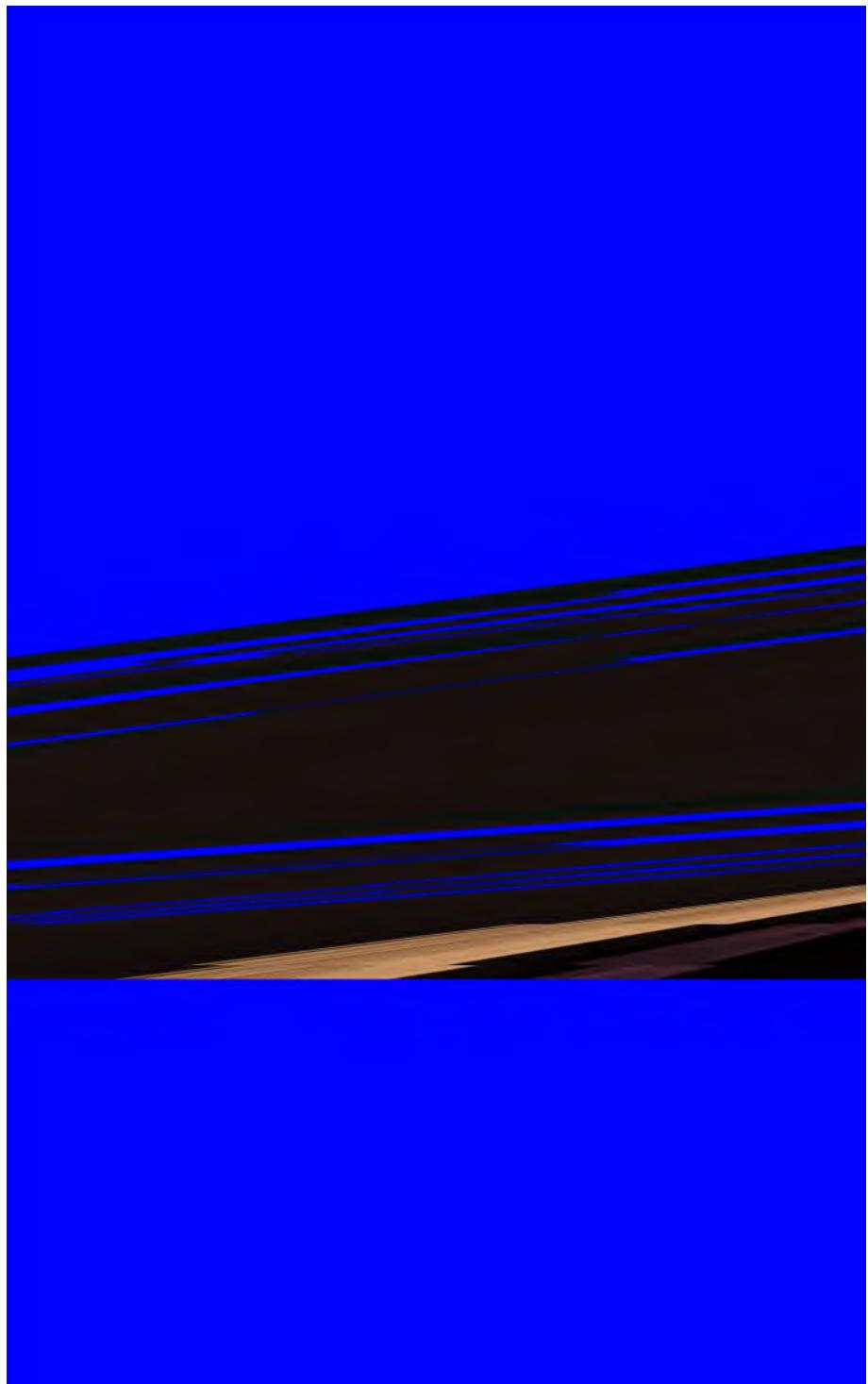




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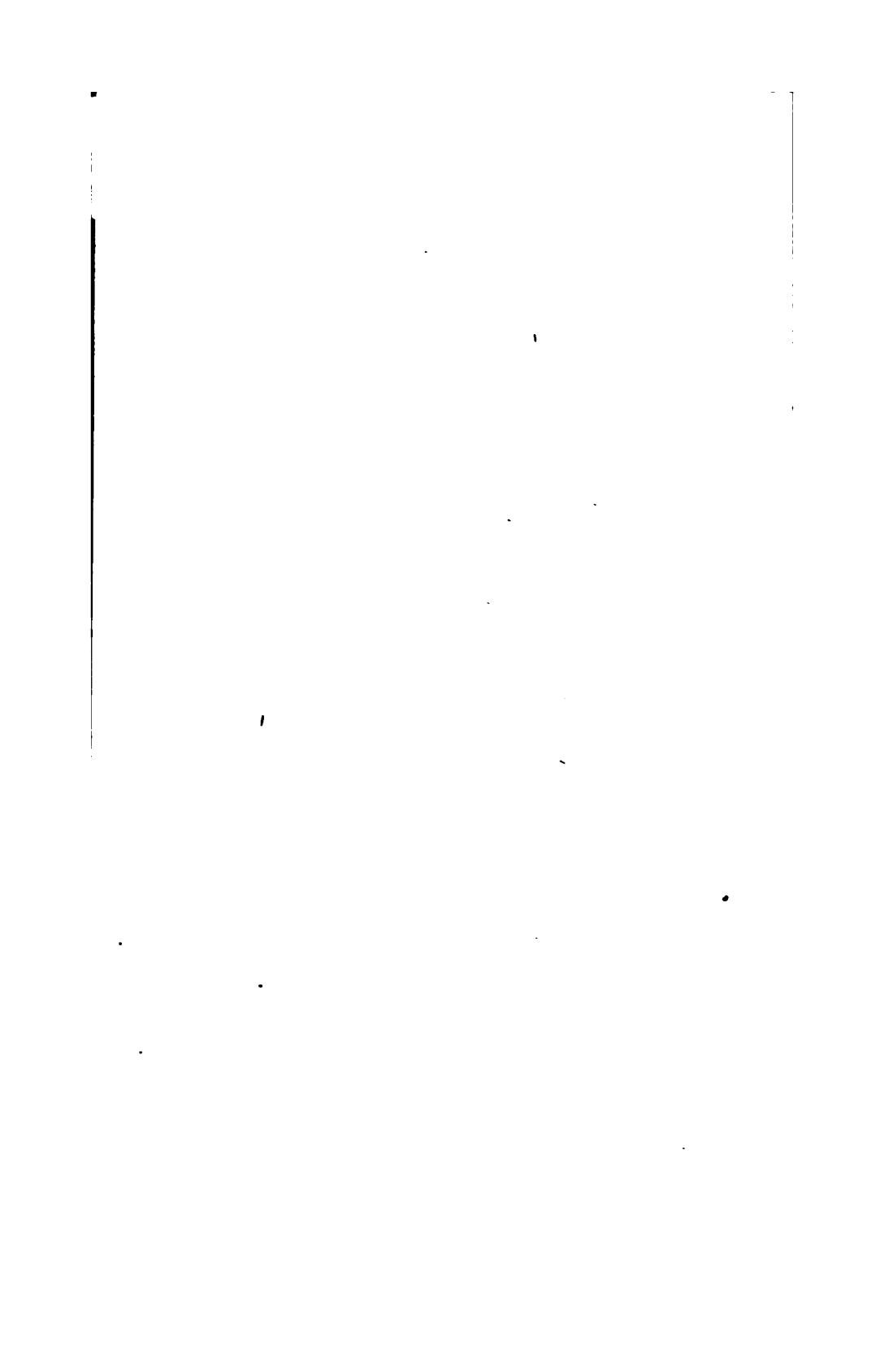


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G R E A T H E A R T.

VOL. II.

G R E A T H E A R T.

BY

WALTER THORNBURY,

AUTHOR OF

"HAUNTED LONDON,"

&c. &c.



"He that will not rule by the rudder, must be ruled by the rock."
Cornish Proverb

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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OF
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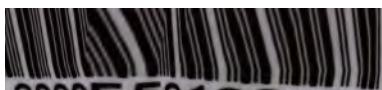
CHAPTER I.

THE PERPETUAL CURATE.

TO examine a pile of coal and clothing club accounts, to write notes, and at the same time to keep an eye on a screen of steaming sheets, the terrible record of a monthly wash, is quite as much as any man could be expected to do at one and the same time.

But when a thick-set girl, sable with reckless industry, entered Mr. Trevena's room, bearing clumsily a large saucepan of soup for the poor, which missus hoped Mr. Trevena would stir every time it began to boil, as the kitchen fire was occupied, the aforesaid gentleman rebelled, the more especially as he was then seated, busy, and chuckling over some notes he had made upon the bishop's late charge. It had just struck him that he would write a charge that might be the most good-natured but telling of satires, because it should be a charge such as charges should be, not such as they are, and the thought tickled the excellent but unworldly man.

"Tell your missus," he said, "that I really cannot have a saucepan here—it takes all my time



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G R E A T H E A R T.

VOL. II.

to go and pick up fir-cones in the plantation."

"Are you all cold, children, and are you all hungry?" A sudden idea had struck the eminently unpractical man.

There was a chorus of "Yes, sir." Visions of cakes gleamed in edible mirage before the children; the little bright eyes stared and seemed to enlarge. "Very, sir, if you please, sir."

A tea-cup stood on the mantelpiece. The saucepan of soup shook its lid, as if eager to be drank. Mr. Trevena, in a guilty sort of way, ladled out a cupful.

"Here, children, take it in turns. Jinny, you first—girls before the boys—now then, Sally, Kitty—now you, Molly."

The children drank the soup with delight. Mr. Trevena gave them no resting time, for fear of the return of his dreaded sister. Directly they had finished the warm collation, he hurried them off to the wood-house, where the gardener was to supply them with what they required for Guido's destruction.

"And after all," thought Mr. Trevena, "and after all, it is only a little less soup for dinner."

A little less indeed—about four large spoonfuls were all that remained. How unpractical Christian charity is.

It was a bright, hard, cold morning; the sun was shining with a white light; and the holly trees, studded with scarlet drops, glistened in their green, burnished, and prickly panoply. A large log,

smouldering into white ashes on the hearth, was chapped here and there with crimson rents. Outside, on the lawn, the robin sang as he picked up the worm that good Nature had iced ready for his consumption. The worthy curate struck the log a violent, unchristian blow, that drove up showers of sparks, and settled down to add up the school accounts, finding a redundancy in which to the amount of £3 14s. 2½d., he laughed aloud with good-humour, and, rubbing his hands in glee, woke the log up again with a blow that cracked the charred wood in two.

As he turned his back to the window to perform this *Cœur-de-lion* feat, a light step passed the window, and a lively hearty blow of the knocker rang through the house. There was a bustle in the kitchen, instantly, as when a gale of wind breaks suddenly on a ship. In dashed Emily, and tore off the saucepan, to her astonishment much lighter than she expected. In dashed Orgles, and carried off the sheets, as easily as Sampson tore off the gates of Gaza.

There was always this sort of strange scurry and unbolting when you made a call at the cottage.

"Mr. Arthur Tolpedden, sir," said Emily, as she threw open the door.

Arthur entered in his frank, hearty way, so fearless, yet so full of deference to the feelings and prejudices of others; his eyes glowing with vigorous health, and his complexion such as only could be shown by one who had passed his youth chiefly in

the country. He took off his buckskin gloves, tossed them into his hat and shook hands warmly with his old friend.

"Busy I see, Trevena," said Arthur, as he sat down at the fire and glanced at the MS. that lay on the desk before Mr. Trevena.

"Yes," replied the author, his simple-hearted vanity blowing again into a flame, as he snatched up his papers. "I have been writing a charge for my friend the Bishop of Solent."

"But there is no such diocese," said Arthur, somewhat amazed; "at least I never heard of it."

"That is exactly it, Arthur," said Mr. Trevena, smiling, and rubbing his long prominent chin. "My Charge is a covert satire against many of our somewhat proud and selfish prelates. Listen, here's a rub—'I lament that 2,000 of our brother clergy support themselves and families on less than £150 a year. How are they to live like gentlemen on a pittance like that? Their life is one long struggle with a hardening poverty. Their social position is not sufficiently above that of their flock, their children sink still lower in the social scale. The petty cares that harass our poorer clergy are, I may say, so many thorns in their path to heaven. When they should be teaching others the road to the cross, they are only planning how to escape penury for themselves. I therefore wish that Mr. Hookem's friend, Mr. Dufton Digweed, would bring a bill into Parliament——'"

"I differ from you, Trevena," said Arthur. "I think the clergy are too much above the people at present. It was the friars and the Wesleyan preachers who really reached them."

Trevena read down all opposition by continuing—

"—a bill into Parliament to provide that all clergymen receiving less than £100 a year should be exempt from every kind of impost, whether income tax, poor rate, highway rate, or land tax."

"An excellent plan, if you can persuade the Government that it is excellent. By-the-bye, are you going to Hookem's party?"

"Yes, my sister insists on my postponing the night-school, which is that evening, and her rule, as you know, is absolute. How is it that you are not reading with Tregellas this morning?"

"Mr. Tregellas has gone to the Ruri-Decanal at Bodmin, where thou ought to be, thou heretical and rebellious minister," said Arthur laughing.

"Well, Arthur, I am, as you know, rather a schismatic about bishops, and rural deans, too, and should like to see them once more net-making and tent-making, like their great predecessors."

"Have you seen Waverton's appeal for his church, Trevena?" said Arthur, drawing a local paper from his pocket.

Mr. Trevena read aloud—

"'Altar cross, altar vases, lights for sacrarium, frontals, alms-bags, hangings for the seasons.' Why, the man is mad! Don't you remember

how he flew out at me at Hookem's pic-nic. This is a glorification of ironmongery-jewelry. What are 'hangings for the seasons?' Rubbish! the fellow is a fool! But what can we expect, when our bishops preach about clerical retreats. Look here what this bishop says."

As Mr. Trevena said this, he drew a lavender-coloured book from the mantelpiece, and jammed his finger down on a specially obnoxious passage.

"Withdraw yourselves for a while from your ordinary duties, and give yourselves alone, or in communion with others, to prayer, self-examination, meditation, and other religious exercises. Do you not see what all that leads to, Arthur?"

Arthur replied he scarcely knew.

"Then I'll tell you, *To a monastery* with its fretful, mischievous celibacy, its petty envies, its cowardly desertion of home duties, and all its ridiculous distortions of human nature."

Tears of excitement sprang up in the good man's eyes as he uttered this denunciation, so to hide these he turned and made a lunge at the very reddest centre of the fire.

Arthur turned the conversation by asking if Trevena had read the "Sea-Side Hexameters" he had sent him.

Trevena, in a half guilty way, excavated under a pile of sermons, drew out at last the copy of the *Cornhill Magazine* that contained the verses of young Arthur, and began reading them.

"Many-footed and swift rush the trampling waves of the ocean,
White-maned, fierce, ten deep, fleet as the steeds of the prairie;
White-maned, tameless, and wild as the raging horse of the Tartar;
Level in rank, unsaddled, unbridled, unridden by any,
For none but the Angel of Death can bestride them or rein them.
Their cry is the ceaseless howl of the suffering wretches in torment,
Of Cain, Holofernes, and Herod, Ananias, Sapphira, and Judas."

"Good cadences," said Trevena; "but, after all, I think the Hexameter is a mistake, Arthur; it has such a mechanical and wooden trot about it, it wearies me more, I think, even than the heroic stanza. Don't waste your talent about it. The perpetual promise of rhyme is most aggravating, my dear boy. Renounce it—it is like a bad farm, no tillage will make anything of it—it is an exotic, it won't grow in our cold climate.

Arthur battled for his experiment.

"These run better, I think," he said, evidently convinced that the fault lay in the reader.

"Aye for the planks of the ships the sea-worm and canker have fretted,
Aye for the mast bedded deep in the labouring heaps of the sand-drift,
Aye for the pennon of crimson, the slippery dark weed hath tangled,
Aye for the cable untwisted, and loosened, and shredded, and soddened,
Rough with the sea-shell, and crisp with the salt of the glittering crystals."

“Very clever, the tone of the lament. Well, I do not like thee, Doctor Fell.”

“All I can say——”

A knock at the door.

“Come in—come in.”

“If you please, sir,” said Emily, “here’s old Penna come to ask you to lend him an old black coat to go to his son’s funeral in, and missus says of course you won’t do nothing of the kind.”

“Nonsense! Let him have that old one with the new cuffs directly—it is in the right-hand drawer; and tell him to take care of it. That’s rather cool, though, of Penna,” he said, turning to Arthur, as the door closed behind sable Emily.

“Well, I think perhaps it is,” said Arthur, laughing. “I’d see him further before I’d let him wear one of my coats!”

“To follow Scripture, I ought, you know, Arthur, to give him my Inverness cape also; but he shall wait for that till it gets a little older, my income not being very remarkable. But, bless me, if there’s not Mrs. and Miss Tregellas stopping at the gate.

And so it was; a little pony-carriage had just dashed up to the door, and out of it were stepping two ladies and a little girl. In a moment or two their violet ribbons fluttered past the window. Then came a little natty knock.

Arthur felt all at once conscious of the blood in his heart rising in some extraordinary sort of spring-tide, then a fire seemed to break out in his

cheeks, but that his pride forced back, and he felt an eager but half-anxious curiosity to know how Lucy would receive him.

Mr. Trevena went himself to the door, and ushered in the two ladies and Clara in his cheerful, kindly way, for there was no vinegar in his religion, he was a sincere and warm-hearted man, who did not waste time in unmeaning apologies. As they entered, Arthur stepped forward and shook hands with them both.

There was a certain self-conscious deference in the way he shook Lucy's proffered hand. She, too, was cordial, natural, and frank as usual, but he saw in a moment that it was a manner meant for everyone, and by no means directed to him. Her eyes were clear, limpid, and brown as those of a wild dove, but there seemed no recognition in them. Her smile was cold, almost repelling, and did not vary, whether it fell on him or Trevena. Could there be anger lurking under the sunlit ice of that unusual manner?

"Why, too," thought Arthur, "does she talk so little, and with such careless indifference, as if her mind was not with the words."

Mrs. Tregellas, a clear-complexioned, bustling, pleasant matron, of seven-and-forty, looking bright with the cold weather, and removing her driving-gloves, launched into chat, in which Lucy contrived so to mingle as to prevent any divisions of conversation.

"And the pig, how *did* it turn out?"

"Oh ! yes, how did it turn out ?"

"It died with fortitude," said Mr. Trevena, patting the palm of his hand with a paper cutter, "it made a goodly ending at the turn o' the tide. He weighed twice as much as his elder brother, and became, indeed, latterly, so fat, that old Pena had to sit up all night and feed him with a spoon!"

The ladies looked at each other and laughed. Lucy in her own merry, silvery way, like a peal of fairy bells.

"Nothing in life became him so much as the leaving it. I told them not to tell me when they killed him, because he was a favourite of mine ; so when the butcher came I put wool in my ears, and walked to Minster to get out of the way."

"It always seems like homicide," said Arthur, "when a pig's killed in a village."

"So it does," said Lucy, with just one moment's glance at the speaker.

"And so the Exhibition is closed at last, I see from the papers," said Mrs. Tregellas ; "and Lucy is the only one of us who saw it."

"Were you pleased with it, Miss Tregellas ?" said Arthur.

"Yes, I was pleased ; but there was too much to see, and the best things, the pictures, were always so crowded."

"Our friends, the Barkers," said Mrs. Tregellas, say that when the organ played its last

grand farewell, and it began to get dark, and Rimmel's scented fountain ceased, it was quite pathetic to see the lingering people, sorry to leave the scene of a whole summer's enjoyment."

"I don't believe much myself in exhibitions," said Trevena ; "they only change the direction of trade, they don't increase it. They are got up by vain men to gain publicity, and to offer opportunities for fussy displays, so the *Forge* says."

"Which never said a sound good-natured thing yet, and never praises anyone but Lord Derby and Littlemore the poet."

"You are quite right, Arthur," said Mrs. Tregellas ; "isn't he, Lucy?"

"I can't bear the *Forge*," said Lucy, refusing any direct accordance with Arthur's views.

"Poor Prince Albert," said Mr. Trevena, "thought exhibitions would be marts for the interchange of ideas," said Mr. Trevena ; "but I can trace no special practical benefit derived from them. Things worth buying need no exhibitors to bring them from the Continent."

Mr. Trevena here rang the bell to send Emily for her missus. But Emily, upon receiving the order, opened her sable lips and delivered a short oracle.

"If you please mum—sir—missus begs her compliments to Missus and Miss Tregellas, and is sorry that she is doing something that she cannot well leave, and hope they'll excuse her."

Trevena shrugged his shoulders.

"That's the pig being salted," he said drily.

"What Lilly and I really came for, Mr. Trevena," said Mrs. Tregellas, "was to just take one look at your school."

"Just one little peep," said Lucy.

"And so you shall—of course you shall. Arthur, come, put on your hat and go with us. My eldest class, I must inform you, is absent collecting eleemosynary wood for Guy Fawkes's *auto-da-fé*; but the little things are all there. You High Church people don't burn Guys, do you?"

"Oh! yes, we do," said Lucy, laughing; "and a Pope too. There are no Roman Catholics near us to be hurt by that religious ceremonial."

There was a delicious sense of gentle irony in the manner in which this was said.

The road to the school, to Arthur's secret, but intense delight, was so narrow that it compelled Lucy, but evidently against her will, to allow her mother, Clara, and Mr. Trevena to walk first, while she and Arthur followed, for a moment or two without speaking.

At last, with a coldness too severely rigid to be real, Lucy said,

"Do you compete for Mr. Hookem's silver cup, Mr. Tolpedden?"

"Yes; and we meet at the 'Merry Maidens' on Tuesday week. I hope we shall see you there."

"I suppose papa will take us," said Lucy, with almost more indifference than the answer needed.

Arthur could not bear this any longer.

"Miss Tregellas," he said, in a low voice, "I am afraid I have done something to offend you?"

Lucy was silent for a moment.

"Nothing went wrong, I hope, about St. Tudy's fair?"

"Only this," Lucy uttered the words quietly, "that you did not keep your promise—but then, what are promises?"

"I did—not—keep—my promise!" said Arthur, astonished.

Love looks at first so like his twin-brother, Friendship, that he can scarcely be distinguished apart. Both Arthur and Lily, as they talked, felt an interest in the conversation, but did not dare to consider from whence the interest arose. Yet Lucy could not conceal that she was hurt at the non-performance of the promise about the fair at St. Tudy; while Arthur's eagerness in self-defence would have betrayed his secret to any indifferent person.

"Indeed, Miss Tregellas, on my honour I left Bradbrain, Lucas, and Fitzhugh on their straight way home to your father's house."

"The pair arrived about midnight, and in a horrible state, singing, shouting, and defying my father. It was all mamma could do to induce him not to have them turned out of doors."

"I am very sorry, and very astonished at Bradbrain; I did not think he could ever forget that he was a gentleman."

"Some one did tell papa that you encouraged them to remain."

"Whoever said so, I deny it, Miss Tregellas," said Arthur, lingering at a turn in the road, in order to emphasize his sentence; "whoever said so uttered an intentional lie. I left their party only when they had already started, or pretended to start, for St. Petrock's; and I kept my promise to the letter, in all but the coming with them to the rectory door."

Lucy looked up, and smiled—sunshine seemed again to brighten in her eyes. She seemed so glad at Arthur's contradiction of the report, that she did not make any effort to show that she was pleased at the earnestness of his defence, and that she implicitly believed it.

"I am glad, Mr. Tolpedden, that the story was not true. I found it hard to believe you regardless of a promise."

"You could not think that I had broken it?"

"No, I did not for a long time—not even when papa became so angry, and complained of you and Mr. Bradbrain for not having prevented it; but afterwards, when——"

Arthur was too generous a fellow to accuse Bradbrain of having led Lucas and Fitzhugh into the discreditable revel.

"Who was it spread the report? Will you tell me?"

"No. That I may not tell you, so do not ask me."

By this time they had reached the school-room door, and the conversation ceased.

That afternoon, when Mr. Trevena returned home, his terrible sister opened the door for him. She was followed by Emily, who carried the almost empty soup-vessel, to which her mistress pointed. All Miss Trevena said was these few words in a hollow and prophetic voice,

“ John, this is most unfeeling conduct ! You’ll never get salt to your bread ; no, not if you live for three hundred years !”

CHAPTER II.

THE CAPITULATION.

THE morning after the mesmeric lecture was a hard frost—a black frost. The road was rough and wrinkled as the hide of an old elephant. The wind blew keen and cold over the frozen fields and shook down frosty fur crystals from the branches of the trees.

Mrs. Davis, of the Boscastle post-office, was sorting the morning mail, when Sampy again presented himself at the half door. Not this time in a slinking half-deprecating way, but with a bold sanctimoniousness peculiar to himself—a confidence was in his walk, and in every gesture.

There was about Sampy just that air of quiet triumph with which a veteran gamekeeper goes to

a trap, with the certainty of finding in it the vermin for which he had set the bait the night before. Yes ; Sampy was as sure of the bird in the bush as if it was the bird in the hand.

The Dowser was no special favourite with Mrs. Davis, who was a strict Churchwoman, and had a hatred of mining speculations, by which her good husband had once been bitten. So she went on sorting the packs of letters, and tucking them into the little nest of pigeon-holes behind her.

“Good mornen, Missus Davis; how d’ye fadgeys ’twere now ? (how d’ye get on)”

“Pure and brave, thankee, Mister Sandoe. What can I do for you ?”

“There’s a letter for me, Mrs. Davis, if I’m not wrong.”

“Yes, Mr. Sandoe, I think there is.”

As Mrs. Davis said this, she dashed at a distant pigeon-hole, and drew forth a dozen or so of local letters, directed to the Post-office, Boscastle, and shuffled them over with a practised hand.

“No, Mr. Sandoe ; there’s no letter for ‘ee.”

Sandoe turned to go away, but reluctantly ; before he reached the door he turned and came back.

“Yes, Mrs. Davis,” said he, “I’m a believer in special Providences, even for a poor sinner like me ; and there’s something tells me, marm, that the rainbow did not shine over me this morning for nothing. Please to look again, for I feel something working in me like balm, marm, and it

tells me, plain and clear, that there is a letter."

"Drat the man!" thought Mrs. Davis, as she again tipped letter by letter over with the fore-finger of her right hand, and holding them with the left. "Oppy—no; Spargo—Williams—no; Balmorn—Treweras—no; Tremwith (that must be sent on)—Gowennap—no; Towan—Musselwhite—no; Chacewater—no, Mr. Sandoe; but what's this little one that's slipped under the big envelope for Lady Rostrevor! Why, deary me, if it is not for you?"

The Dowser clutched at it as a hawk clutches at the bird it is dissecting. His eyes turned upwards—the purple side of his face grew of a deep liver colour.

"Hallelooliah!" he exclaimed, "let me erect here an Ebenezer. Mrs. Davis, I told you I had something telling me there was a letter, and here it is. Lord be praised for all things!"

"Well, Mr. Sandoe might have thanked me for my trouble, I think—the prechen curmudgeon," said Mrs. Davis, as she watched the Dowser walk quickly down, without a word more, towards St. Petrock's, literally devouring the contents of the letter, the arrival of which had caused him such delight. "It was Mr. Mordred's writing, too," she thought. "I suppose it is his bill for attending poor old Roby; but bills don't generally give one much pleasure. Drat the rogue! People sez he keeps alf the charity collections for hisself. He's as hollow as a clomen cat (plaister cast), sure 'nuff."

Sampy's letter ran thus :

" November 5, 1862.

" **MY DEAR MR. SANDOE,**

" Pray call as soon as you can find it convenient, to talk over the mysterious speculation of which you gave me an inkling. I value your experience, and have much reliance on your great judgment in mining matters; my only wish is to secure myself, as a prudent man is bound to do, before he commits himself to any partnership bargain.

" I remain, my dear Mr. Sandoe,

" Faithfully yours,

" **ENOCH MORDRED.**

" Mr. Sampson Sandoe."

" I have him in a cleft stick!" said Sampy to himself, grinding his teeth, "that I do naw; he's so full of trix, he'd chete the old Dewel hisself, ef ha cud; but you shan't chete me—you shan't chete me, Mister Mordred, not till there's only half a dozen pilchards left to salt in all Cornwall, even then I'd wrestle him, and see which would go down on the planchen (floor) first, for I've not been through the wilderness for nothing, that I tell 'ee; I've had the marks of your teeth in me before to-day, you old blood-sucker!—and now it's my turn. I'll have money for the blood I've lost, and that's a good bargain, this side of the Tamar, any how."

Mr. Horace Beaumont Belleville, the gifted

Miss Juliana, and the suffering serf of a pianist, were all gone; a slime of deceit and ignorant belief was the only trace they had left behind them. Sampy's artifice had been completely successful.

Mr. Mordred was out on his round. Mr. Bradbrain, smart and glossy as ever, had tucked up his cuffs, and was busy preparing grey powder for a poor patient old woman, who sat with two or three other bandaged men and children, on a bench in the surgery, while an assistant, a handsome, sly, pert-looking boy, in a waistcoat with serge sleeves, was bruising up some frothy salve in a large pestle and mortar, which stood close to a grooved pill-making machine, and an enormous bottle of opodeldoc.

"There, take that, Uncle Jan, night and morning," he said, as he handed an old man a bottle of medicine. "Does your son work now on the Tucking Mills at Hallenbeagle?"

"Iss."

"Very well, then, give him these pills for Captain Williams. And now, how are you, aunty?"

"Dreadful bad, Mr. Bradbrain, all geddy and nohow, and all day and night my poor head do go 'bezanzoon! 'bezanzoon!' jest so. One day there's a lodgement, next day there's an ailment, third day a sourment, and so it do go on all the week, like an engine wheel; and aw! plaze sure it never comes round right neither—it don't!"

Bradbrain well understood the Cornish people, so sturdy, independent, and fond of equality, so warm-hearted, shrewd, yet simple, brave, and honest. He joked with them, remembered their family affairs, and did not desert them to attend the rich.

"First or last coor" (spell of work), people said, "there's no pride about hem."

It was just as Mr. Bradbrain had finished his task, and was dividing the grey powder into little heaps, each on its square of thin white paper, that a confident knock came at the door, and in walked Sampy, his snuff-coloured coat buttoned up sprucely, and his big plated spectacles (spurtables they are called in Cornish) on—this last badge of distinction was Sampy's mode of marking the climax of careful dress and self-consequence. As for his white rope of a neck-cloth, it was positively not more than three weeks from the washing-tub.

How are 'ee, soase (friends), Aunt Betty, Louis, Siali (Josiah), a blessing be upon this house, and all them as owns it. Morning, Mr. Bradbrain, and my respects to 'ee."

"You people wait here," said Mr. Bradbrain, turning down his cuffs with that usual smart promptitude that distinguished him, "I've got some business to transact. Mr. Sampy, come into the parlour with me."

Bradbrain shut with care a glass door that led from the parlour into the green-house, and then

placed an arm-chair near the fire for Sampy, with much affectation of politeness.

"Now out with it, Uncle Sampy; let's be frank together," he said, as he seated himself opposite the Dowser, one foot gaily on the hob; "out with it. I am entitled to make terms for any *bona fide* offer you may make; but you must remember we were once bitten by certain asbestos on Craddock Moor, that turned out rubbishing actynolite, not worth the counting-house punch that we gave away."

"Bygones should be bygones, Mr. Bradbrain. The Lord giveth, you know, and the Lord taketh away! I tell 'ee it's a wall of pure copper this time, a holy blessed wall, et es; the Lord revealed it to me, the blessed divining rod confirmed et, and the signs have been sent. Oh! Mr. Bradbrain, do not push from you the Lord's gifts. Those who have dismissed beggars from their doors have sometimes turned away angels unawares. Don't despise the day of small things—don't 'ee!"

"Bosh!" said Mr. Bradbrain, with his usual snorting, insolent laugh, as he rang the bell, and ordered the wine in. "No humbug or canting, Sampy, will make me sign your contract; it won't do with this child, Sampy! What I want is facts, proof of money's worth, not the tricks with a hazel-twig, that you gull half-drunk miners with. Where is this gold mine of yours? Come, take a glass of wine."

"No wine for me, thankee, Mr. Bradbrain—I'm not a *cheel van* (little child), to have secrets

wormed out of me by liquor," said Sampy, sternly, and in a more natural voice than usual. "I've got a good thing here, Mr. Bradbrain, and I want a good price for it!"

"But how are we to know it is a good thing, Sampy?" said Bradbrain, filling and tossing off a glass of wine with imperturbable *sang-froid*, "how are we to know it, that's the rub, Sampy."

"Sign me a contract, granting me one-third of the profits, no less—I won't bate a crown o't, if the secret died with me—the divining rod has told me, them as will soon be in Heaven have told me where the metal is, and I'm not going to part with the secret, and so I tell 'ee; them as snares pilchards deserves more than the fins, Mr. Bradbrain."

Bradbrain stooped forward and eyed Sampy, as he said this, as keenly as if he was a lunatic against whom a commission *de lunatico* was about to be instituted. He stooped so close that he could see himself reduced to a Liliputian seated in the centre of the pupils of Sampy's eyes. Having completed the examination, he threw himself back in his chair, tossed off another glass of sherry, and laughed with his usual neighing snort.

"By all the canters that ever canted, and all the decanters that ever decanted too, if I don't really begin to think there is some secret worth having after all."

"The blessed divining rod told me, the blue flame at night told me, the knockers told me, and

the angels in Heaven have at last backed them all up. May I never rise from this seat alive, Mr. Bradbrain, if I haven't got the right tecket on this time! Now be just. You know I have led you and Mr. Mordred to money afore now."

"Well, there was a thousand or two we picked out of Wheal Basset, Sampy, but we lost it all again, and more too, remember, at Gonamena, besides the cursed mull at Grambler and St. Day."

"We ought to have trusted to the divining rod—"

"Death and hell to the d—d divining rod," shouted Bradbrain, as he started up, his face suffusing with a yellow red blood and his eyes dilating with passion, "keep the rod in pickle for your cheating mining captains and poor blind London gulls, but don't thrust it down my throat; and come, Dowser, let us be frank together—there's no cheating with us. Don't beat about the bush any more—you'll not get a shilling more out of us by it, so I tell you."

"There's no bush here and no beating, Mr. Bradbrain," said Sampy, smiling craftily, and eyeing the broken toe of one of his boots. "The lode bears from 25 degrees to 50 degrees south by east, and Captain Thomas, of Dolcoath, says that's the best bearing known, and he's A 1 all over Cornwall; there's no horse here—it's a *champion* lode, I tell 'ee, there's no heave in it for a good mile. The gossan is rich brown and crumbly, and there's quartz and fluor spar in it, and

they are as sure signs of good copper as gulls are of a shoal of mackerel. I tell ee if Carnbrea brings in 6.2893, this'll double it. There'll be 1000*l.* dividends to every *2l.* share, and it's easy working too. This lode won't dwindle or split into strings, please sure. I've tried the ore myself, and it will ticket at Redruth for as big a figure as any in the county, take it where you will. It's a champion lode, I tell ee—proved *champion*, and I thank the Lord for it, as for all other mercies."

"Now, no preaching, none of your sickening cant, Sampy, or I shall begin to suspect it is all humbug, like that St. Day business, or the cursed Badger Dale."

Sampy had poured forth his recapitulation of the virtues of the new mine with the intense unction of an enthusiast, who is himself completely convinced. Even the purple quartering of his face (to speak heraldically) grew darker and more sanguinous under the excitement. Glowing with confidence, he now took the glass of wine proffered him by his astute companion, drank it slowly, and licked his lips as he put down the glass.

"Creature comforts," he said; "but man's a weak vessel, and requires 'em good—halloojah! The flesh is weak, and needs 'em good."

Bradbrain looked hard into the fire for a moment. Then he rubbed his chin, rose and left the room. He returned in a moment with a sheet of foolscap paper, a penny stamp, a pen and ink.

"But I want guarantees, Sampy, my man."

" Guarantees ?—zoundkins ! what ! when I only ask for a third of what's found, nar better, nar wuss. No devisions until profits—ain't that fair ? Before the Lord I tell ee it's a brau' keenly lode—a champion lode, and you'll be well able to spare a third—I can get other men to help me, I can."

" Well, I agree," said Bradbrain, slowly, reluctantly, and thoughtfully ; " here, I have drawn up the conditions and signed them."

Sampy read the deed over with an uncontrollable chuckle.

" *To have and to hold,*" he said ; " I like that to have and to hold. To have and to hold—that sounds right, that do. There shall be no May games with me ; I've been in the wilderness too long for that—I fought with wild beasts at Camborne too often for partnership trix—well here I put my name, Sampson Sandoe—now, that's bound fast. You and Mr. Mordred will some day or other be glad when I came, as the bringer of glad tidings."

" And now, then, for the secret," said Bradbrain eagerly, as he leaned both arms forward on the table, and rested his chin upon them.

Sampy coughed twice, as if the secret was hard to bring up.

" You must know, Mr. Bradbrain, that my old step-father, Roby Trevose, used, years ago, to work at the mines in this very district. When they were abandoned he went off to South Ameriky, to the Rio del Monte, and there he remained for fifteen

years, while I was seeking metals with the divining rod, working as cappen at the Great Wheal Tor, and toiling in the brick fields of Egypt generally. When my step-father returned, he and I and my wife went to live together at St. Just, but there the bulls of Bashan compassed me round."

"I remember, Sampy, something about the Burial Club row, and your wife's and wife's sister's death."

"The wicked were extinguished as the fire in thorns; but they drove me into the wilderness again, for all that, before I trod 'em under foot. Well, then, we all came to St. Petrock's, and there one day the Lord directed my hand, in Roby's absence, out seal-shooting, to a paper in which a comrade of his, who had died at Rio Janierer, when he was in the South Ameriky, had written down the bearings and character of a rich copper lode, left untouched by him and his mates, when the mines were given up in these parts. When Roby returned, and I confronted him with it, it frightened him ; he confessed the whole story, made a clean breast of it, and told me he had been only waiting, hoping to buy the land for ourselves, or to get some one to do it for us. From that time we used to often go at night and work at the place, and bring home lumps of copper, which I sold away at Camborne, as specimens, and sich like 'traade.' We waited long and patiently, and now our reward cometh."

"But where *is* the mine ?"

Sampy looked round him, as if the very chairs

and fire-irons had ears ; then he whispered into Bradbrain's ear,

“ *The Old Man's working at Endellion.*”

“ What ! on No Man's Land ?—that's the Tolpeddens.”

“ Yes.”

“ Why, you old duffer, you are selling the skin before the bear's killed !”

“ No, no ; I tell 'ee, it's easy to get it—they bank with Mr. Mordred. It is easily done—you both know how to tie a man fast with paper, you know how to draw shy birds into the snare of the fowler ; and at all events, you don't suffer, for I only get a third of what you gain.”

“ I really don't see my way to it at present,” said Bradbrain, gloomily ; “ Tolpedden is a proud, hard dog—he'll part with nothing ; he owes us money, that he won't pay ; but that's only to show his self-importance, because Mordred's quick pressing style riles him. As for the young fellow, there's no making him drink, or play at cards, or anything—he's a devilish deal too sharp and suspicious for me to get over him easily ; now, if it had been that hair-brained fool Lucas, that would have been quite another pair of shoes. We've no great reason, Sampy, to trust you. Now, come, how did it happen, man, that no one but Roby knew the secret of the copper lode—now, come, man, how was that ?”

“ There was, there was, sir, many of the tributaries as knew of it ; it had been a plan of theirs,

when old Squire Tolpedden began to get tired of the expense, to club together and keep the secret of the find to themselves, till the land could be got for next to nothing, if anything happened to the young squire, who was then fighting in India. But one by one the yellow fever took 'em all to himself, all but Roby and Billam Tremuan, who drank himself to death on his way back."

But now, leaving these worthies contriving how best to outwit our good friends the Tolpeddens, we will follow Mr. Mordred on his voyage of discovery, after having first taken a glance at wrong-headed Mr. Waverton.

CHAPTER III.

THE FEAST OF ST. LUCIFER.

MR. WAVERTON had dug out Saint Lucifer from the lowest strata of the *Acta Sanctorum*, where, to use an irreverent simile, that worthy had long lain imbedded, like a hard-boiled egg in a pigeon pie.

Not that this saint, with the ambiguous name, had any special attractions for our young ecclesiologist, but then he served as a weapon to aim a blow against Guy Fawkes. Saint Lucifer was an anchorite of the fourth century, who astounded Mesopotamia with miracles. He healed three lepers, and cured several agues. Once, while

standing in a Syrian garden, with his arms raised above his head in adoration, a sparrow came and built a nest in his hand. The worthy saint, touched with a fine compassion, remained without moving, till the bird had hatched its young. Eventually the good but wrong-headed man, overflowing with zeal, confronted the Roman pro-consul in full court, and as that official perversely refused to instantly embrace Christianity, St. Lucifer struck him a tremendous buffet, for which the good saint naturally enough suffered death half an hour afterwards.

Mr. Waverton was one of those restless young ecclesiastics who, disliking the Church of England as cold and heartless, wander about in Vanity Fairs of semi-Papistical upholstery, in search of some impossible ideal, which ultimately leads them into the muddy pitfall of monkery, or the slough of spurious infallibility.

It was about four o'clock on the fifth of November, that Mr. Trevena was on his way to Camel-ford workhouse to see an old parishioner of his, who had been lately condemned to that enviable home for the aged English. He was in high spirits with the walk, and the prospect of a fragrant and demonstrative Protestant bonfire in the evening.

With his black wide-awake, his Inverness cape, and his stout stick, Mr. Trevena, as he strode along, ruminating over schemes of now impracticable philanthropy, was a pleasant object either for man

or angel to contemplate. The sun was preparing to set, and, like Nelson at Trafalgar, had arrayed himself in his most gorgeous uniform for his parting scene. In some persons a pebble or a shadow is as good as a pyramid or a mountain, as a text for meditation. The sight of St. Tudy's from the hill above, presently lost, as he descended into a hollow, reminded Mr. Trevena of a passage in good old Thomas Fuller's honest contemplations.

The passage of the pious and punning old divine runs thus :

“Travelling on the plain, I discovered Salisbury steeple many miles off; coming to a declivity, I lost the sight thereof, but climbing up the next hill, the steeple grew out of the ground again. Yea, I often found it and lost it, till, at last, I came safely to it, and took my lodging near it. It fareth thus with us whilst we are wayfaring to heaven. Mounted on the Pisgah top of some good meditation, we get a glimpse of our celestial Canaan. But when, either on the fall of an ordinary temper, or in the fall of an extraordinary temptation, we lose the view thereof. Thus in the sight of our soul; heaven is discovered, covered and recovered, till, though late, at last, though slowly, surely, we arrive at the haven of our happiness.”

It was while brooding over this quaint meditation that Mr. Trevena reached a turning of the road leading to the church, and halted to look down on it and upon the village that it over-towered.

Just at this moment a procession, organized by Mr. Waverton, emerged from the church doors, and passed through the Lych Gate. As it came towards him Mr. Trevena drew back behind a tree to see it pass.

Waverton was a man with more money than brains, and could afford to indulge in these mischievous fantasies. The toadies and servile train that always surround a well-to-do clergyman, the agreeing clerk, the assenting pew-opener, the cringing schoolmaster, are all always ready volunteers on these occasions. Mr. Trevena summed them all up at a glance.

First came the elder school-children, awkward and lumbering, in little white surplices ; then the clerk and schoolmaster, carrying lighted wax candles, of all things in the world ! In the centre paced foolish Mr. Waverton, with a violet cape over a sort of robe, which bore a huge worked cross, reaching from the nape of his neck almost to his boots. Then followed the pew-opener and sexton, carrying little white banners, on which was inscribed, in fantastic Gothic letters worked in vermillion silk, "*Sancte Lucifere, ora pro nobis !*" Then followed two or three more choristers, singing an uncouth old chant ; and the procession wound its way into the village, twisting its varicolours like those jointed snake toys that children use.

Mr. Trevena followed the galvanized relics of mediævalism till they were lost round a turning.

"Pretty foolery," he said ; "as if we hadn't

enough saints in Cornwall without importing them!"

Just as he uttered these words, the bray and bang of a noisy village band, approaching from the direction of his own village, startled him, and at the same moment a shout, almost loud and harsh enough to be called a howl, made him hurry forward, the more especially that with it came a wrangle of angry voices, and sounds as of a scuffle or quarrel; then

"Remember, remember, the fifth of November,
The gunpowder treason and plot,
We see no reason why gunpowder treason
Should ever be forgot,"

was shouted at the utmost pitch of some thirty stalwart voices.

The simple fact to anticipate Mr. Trevena's intervention was this, the people of St. Tudy's being for the most part dissenters, and extremely opposed to their young rector's innovations, had gone to Endellion to join the Guy Fawkes procession, which, by Sampy's advice, had then returned to St. Tudy's to discomfort Mr. Waverton; unluckily for that gentleman, the two hostile processions had met just opposite the "Wharncliffe Arms."

Civil war seemed imminent, for already one of the banners had been torn down by a drunken miner, and one of the Guy Fawkes bearers had bitten the dust under a well-planted blow from the indignant sexton of St. Tudy's.

The Guy Fawkes, dressed like a Pope, in an old dressing-gown, with three hats on his head, one upon the top of the other, pale tow-hair, to make it resemble Mr. Waverton, a pipe in the corner of his mouth, and a lanthorn in his hand, reclined in his chair like one of the drunken Dutchmen, in some coarse revel of Teniers; his head hung pensively down, awaiting the result, as his bearers mobbed the procession, puffed out the lights, and mocked the alarmed children.

"It's the abomination of desolations allooded to by the prophet!" cried Sampy. "Down with the gasty bafflehead, with the Pope's red tremmings on 'em! Look at 'em!"

"Dear, mussy! only look at 'em," said one of Sampy's abettors. "Lazy pattick, we'll have no Popish tricks here."

"Gurt ugly droozenehead, with his may garnes," said a third. "Knack him on the head with a cobbing hammer, I would, and good riddance of 'em."

A mob soon effervesces into cruelty. The calm, pale, indignation of Mr. Waverton, as, contemptuously, concealing his alarm, he ordered the procession forward, enraged the fanatics more even than resistance would have done.

"I are a man that as a man. Zackly like that, my dear," said the clerk, commencing an assault on Sampy, who fell back shouting—

"Knack down the whole pair (company). We'll have no Papishery in St. Tudy's—nor Papishers!"

"Break 'em in jowds (pieces)!" cried the most truculent of Guy Fawkes' adherents.

"Tear off his Bablonian garments!" cried Sampy. "He's a black sheep with the wrong brand on 'em. He's only fit for the burning!"

"You're poor, misguided people," said Mr. Waverton, turning on them; "but you will never prevent me doing what I think right. I love my Church, and I am ready to die for it!"

"Play up the toon, and drown the bufflehead," cried Sampy; and the band began that ribald tune, "The Cure," in the loudest and most blatant manner; the Endellion people joining in the chorus,

"He wears a cross around his neck,
He well deserves a rope;
He calls Old Nick St. Lucifer,
He is a perfect Pope!"

Then they stamped the cadence, as they howled—

"A Pope! a Pope! a Pope! a Pope!
A Pope! a Pope! a Pope!
With all his Romish fooleries,
He is a perfect Pope!"

Mr. Waverton turned paler, and more nervously angry than before.

"I'll indict you in the Spiritual Court, every one of you," he said. "I declare I'll have you all fined, so I warn you."

"Dite away! warn away!" said Sampy, as he drew out a box of lucifers, and began to snap

them one by one, in allusion to the Mesopotamian saint; "it won't spoil our dinners."

"Threatened men live long," said another great hairy fellow in a blue jersey, probably a fisherman; "let's duck parson in the 'oss pond;" and as he said this he advanced to seize the unfortunate enthusiast by the gown, for Mr. Waverton stood there a miniature A'Beckett.

"We'll warm him," cried a third, pushing several of the children against the remaining banner-bearer.

It was at this crisis, not a moment too late to avert the impending martyrdom of the modern A'Beckett, that Mr. Trevena appeared, a *Deus* worthy of the *nodus*, striding vigorously towards the scene of rival intolerance and mischief.

A violent tapping at a window arrested him; it was Miss Honoria and Miss Grace Waverton, aghast and pale with horror, their mouths fixed as for screaming, half angry, half terrified. They tapped to him sharply, imperiously, and yet piteously. Mr. Trevena took off his hat, and waved his hand, in token of his understanding their wish, and of his promise to instantly attend to it.

But a more powerful appeal was still to be made to a champion, who, indeed, needed no fresh stimulant to exertion. The door of the house where the Miss Wavertons were ambushed flew open, and out darted two ladies. They were Miss Lucy Tregallas and Miss Milly Waverton, pale

with fright, flying like two princesses of Egypt before a dragon.

“Oh! pray, pray, dear Mr. Trevena!” they cried with one voice, “do pray save him from these horrid creatures!”

“There is no danger, my dear Miss Waverton, and my dear Miss Tregellas,” he said, disengaging his arm from the little fingers of the frightened and bright-eyed suppliants. “I’ll soon scare the fellows back; bullies and ruffians are always cowards, and they consider me one of their own party.”

In a moment he was in the thick of the crowd, and standing by the side of the terrified Mr. Waverton, who had now quite lost his head. With one hand he pushed the chief assailant from him, with the other he waved back the crowd of Guido Fawkes’s partisans, fixing his eyes specially on Sampy, who cowered beneath his fixed look. As for the choristers and banner-bearers, they had long since stolen away; and Mr. Trevena had no one to back him, if his first appeal should prove unsuccessful.

“People of Endellion,” he said, “are you drunk or mad, that you come here to insult a poor unoffending minister of Christ, because he differs from you in opinion? You dissenters, who call yourselves martyrs because Government compels you to pay tithes to support God’s worship in another way than your own, how can you come here to practise that intolerance of which you

complain? What! are you burly miners and fishermen cowards enough to come here to threaten a weak young man who cannot resist you? Laugh at his mummeries, stay away from his processions, prevent your wives, sisters, and children being beguiled by such tinsel and gewgaws; but do not raise your hand against him, for the man who does so becomes a criminal in the eyes of the law. It is cowardly and base to assail the weak and helpless; and, in the fever of uncontrolled passion, who amongst us knows how soon he may become a murderer? To your tents, then, O Israel! Let each man worship after his own manner, so that he do not offend against morality, break the laws of England, or insult the national religion."

One by one, during this sermon on Intolerance, the crowd melted away. When the last had slunk off, Mr. Trevena took Waverton's arm, and led him quietly home to receive the caresses and rebukes of his delighted sisters. That done, after shaking hands heartily all round, Mr. Trevena strode away.

"I think, Bernard, we ought to have asked the man to stay luncheon," said the managing, business-like, and august Miss Honoria.

"He is a shocking Low Churchman, and I cannot endure him," replied her grateful brother.

"You all ought to be ashamed of yourselves for treating him so," said Milly, half crying, half laughing.

The course of true love never did run smooth.

CHAPTER IV.

ROBY TAKES HIS SECRETS OUT OF MR. MORDRED'S REACH.

THE author sincerely hopes that he is not a snob. Neither does he wish to rail snobbishly at snobs. He has no desire in the world to expose with vulgar indignation the small weaknesses and petty assumptions of needy people. Plated forks and greengrocers in livery, sham heraldry, profusely dispensed and unpleasantly obtruded on one, are matters of indifference to him, and do not seem to him positive proofs of innate wickedness or baseness. Modern society is, in fact, in such a state of transition, not to mention checkmate, stoppage, and dead lock, that such small offences must needs exist. After all, they do not hurt any one very seriously. Each class is now so afraid of the other, and so meanly tenacious of its own privileges, that perhaps even greengrocers in livery, and gooseberry champagne, may pass as painful necessities. It is the fault of no one in particular that the professions are crowded and land hard to get. What is railed at as snobbery is often only poverty under another name.

But still the author thinks he knows a snob when he sees him, has learned his diagnosis, and hates him to his heart. A snob talks of great people he does not know, a snob wears vulgar jewelry, a snob affects more feeling than he has, a snob is ashamed of poor relations, a snob swaggers; and is ashamed to show good feeling ; a snob of the Mordred class—the tame vulture, the respectable hypocrite, may be known by several tokens—smooth-brushed black coat and woollen gloves are prominent symptoms ; kid gloves are probably too worldly for the Mordred family, woollen look humble, saving, practical, philanthropic ; no pleasant gleam or glint of colour relieved the raven darkness of Mr. Mordred's attire. He trampled on pride with a secret pride greater than that which he condemned. He railed at Pagans, and yet worshiped mammon's gilded calf.

When the eminently worthy banker, doctor, and chairman at religious meetings left his house on the November morning before alluded to, he did not stop to see any patients in St. Petrock's, though a dropsy and two low fevers were eager to see him, but made his way straight for the tabooed cottage of old Roby.

It was a lowering morning ; the air was brown and thick with snow, except to the north-east, where there was a brown yellow gleam, and here and there where blue patches peeped out from among the murky clouds, like glimpses of hope in the lot of a luckless man. The snow was coming down in

those little feathery crystals that seem to rather rise than fall. The ground was already as white as if a miller's waggon had just passed, and the banker's feet left dark marks, as if a portion of his shadow and his soul's blackness was left in each foot-print.

Careless of the weather, as men are who have a strong absorbing passion working within them, Mr. Mordred, with the collar of his greatcoat put up round his ears, walked at his best pace down the path leading to the cottage of the old miner.

There by the sty, not far from the big beam of drift-wood, on which the half obliterated name of the *Little Betsy* could still be discerned, was an old woman kneeling scouring a large yellow pan, as regardless of the weather as a Red Indian Squaw. She was a shrivelled old crone, wearing no cap, but with her scanty grey hair strained off her wrinkled forehead, and twirled into a tight little knot at the back of her head. As she turned to beat in the ice with a rusty fragment of a poker in a pail that stood near her, she looked the very image of one of the Parcæ, who had left her shears, wheel, or distaff, for a moment's breath of fresh air in the upper world.

To Mr. Mordred's reconnoitering eye, Aunty Pierce, for so the old nurse was called, was an outlying picket that showed him that he was approaching an enemy's camp, and that great caution was required for the surprise. His first anxieties

were as to the condition of Roby and the whereabouts of Sampy.

"Well, aunty," he said, "how is Roby?"

"Braave and bad, sir; I think he's passin' away—I do. And his nose is so pecked—it es, and, he gabbles a parcel of nonsense."

"I should like to see how the old man is today."

"That you mustn't, my dear. 'If any one says let me go up to un,' said Sampy to me, 'don't say, iss, sure, but tell them you think 'em all the same, but Roby is better left alone.'

"Is Sampy at home?"

"No, Mr. Mordred, gone to St. Petrock's about some letter."

"Nonsense about Sampy. I must see Roby, or how can I sign his club paper. Just one moment, Mrs. Pierce."

Before Aunty Pierce could decide what course to pursue, the prompt doctor had stepped past her and entered the forbidden cottage.

The old man lay on his palette in an inner side room, moving uneasily in a feverish sleep, and muttering as he lay recollections of old days in the mine. He evidently fancied himself blasting rock in an adit level.

"The powder's in," muttered the old man; "ram down the tampin on the charge—zacky; and bring the snoff lighted—take care, comrade, and don't foach up against me. Not nuff paddar—yes, there is, Billum, there's four fingers deep of

ut. Now, then,"—then his mind wandered back to earlier smuggling times. "Billum," he said, "flash your pistol, my dear, there's the brig coming round St. Anne's Head. Don't go so close, or you'll fall over the cliff, as your father did. Hurrah! here she comes, like flying Isaac, stun sails and all set, we must be off for the tubs—I see 'em out there like a shoal of pilchards—be quicker with the boat, man,—now, all together."

The creak of the door awoke the dying man, his glazing eyes turned feebly towards the new comer, as his bony hands plucked feverishly at the sheets. He evidently mistook Mr. Mordred for his step-son.

"Sampy," he moaned, "dont'ee leave me, my dear, so. It's a cold, dirty night to begin the journey in. Who's that waving a sheet at the window? Dont'ee leave me, Sampy, there's a man with a black face keeps looking in at the door—'tis a poor consarn when one gets old and hafe blind."

Mr. Mordred stepped to the bed, and felt Roby's pulse; with practised indifference he opened one of his eyes with his finger and thumb, and looked in at the light fast sinking in the socket. Then he let the eyelid fall again, and coldly shook his head, as if he had drawn an infallible conclusion, and began to coolly reconnoitre the room.

A triangular corner cupboard seemed specially

to attract his attention. It contained three tea-cups, two empty medicine bottles, a jug with some greenish liquid in it, a chipped wine-glass, and a small pipkin.

As he touched the jug and glass, the faint chink roused the old man.

"Dont'ee give me more doctor's stuff, Sampy, my dear," he gasped, resting for breath between each word; "it's all nought, and it strikes cold inwards—it does no good; nothing now, my dear, will keep me from the journey."

Mordred poured out a little of the liquid in the glass, tasted it, spit several times, and looked very hard at the jug, then drew from his pocket a small phial, about as long as a man's thumb, filled it from the jug, and corking up the bottle, replaced it in his pocket.

Then with a quickness not common in so deliberate a man, Mr. Mordred glided from the bedroom to the outer room, where Aunty Pierce was now busy at some washing.

"How es he, poor soul?" said the old woman; "he'll not go till the turn-tide passes the big rock in the Cove. He won't be much to lay out when he does go—aw! he's such a bag of bones!"

"He's sinking fast. Here, aunty, here's a shilling, go as fast as you can to St. Tudy's for some brandy, and here's twopence to get you some snuff."

"But suppose any gentlefolks, Mr. Mordred,

come to see Dunchine, and want the key of the castle, there's money out of my pocket."

"If anyone does come, I'll give them the key, and pay your loss—now, quick, for Roby won't live an hour if he doesn't have stimulant. I can scarcely feel his pulse."

"Aw! dear, aw! dear, then he is going at last, poor soul, angels about him. I'll be off—keep the fire up, if Roby wants his medicine, it's in the corner cupboard of the bed. Aw! how I wish Sampy was here!"

The instant the greedy, heartless old woman, who had attended death-beds till death had no longer any terror for her, had shuffled out of sight, Mordred darted into the inner room, and sitting down by the bedside, took hold of Roby's cold thin hand. The sick man's mind partially wandered.

"Let the bearers strike up a hymn," he said, "while we rest the coffin here on Arthur's stone. Jose es a heavy man, and now we're near the mine."

All at once Roby rose slightly in bed, and grasped hold of the doctor's two hands.

"Sampy, Sampy, I'm going fast, I mustn't wait till the hour's over—Sampy, don't fritter away that mine at Endellion; it's a brave lode if you can once get it from those Tolpeddens. I've kept that secret—but it was ill-gotten—it's been no use to me. Don't believe them when they tell you I hoccusSED Billum's drink in the ship, for I didn't;

he killed himself with new rum, and so did Tom Pearce. Now it is all yours, Sampy—I'm the last of the gang that had it; the rest are under ground at Tampico, or in the deep sea levels. It's all yours, Sampy—it's no use to me on my journey."

With one last effort the old man groped feebly under his pillow, and drew out a dirty sheet of note-paper, the creases in which were all but cut through with repeated folding and unfolding.

"Here," he said, "tak' it, Sampy; here it is, with all the bearings marked out by Billum, and all the lode mapped out by Tom Pearce, ready for them as works it. Any cappen can find it from that paper."

Mordred snatched at the paper, and read the first page with greedy and irrestrainable eagerness. There are turns in cards when even the oldest players become excited. He discovered the secret, and read it with all the feverish haste of a Greek who had just received a Delphic oracle.

He had reached the bottom of the first page, when a man darted into the room, and tore at it with a tigress tenacity.

The paper parted in two; the first sheet remained with the banker, the other fell into the hands of the new comer. It was Sampy returned, just in time to snatch half the secret, perhaps the most important half, from the hands of Mr. Mordred.

Sampy, livid with anger, glanced at his half of the letter ; then a sour smile passed over his dark, pale, fanatical face.

“ Read—read it, Mr. Mordred,” he said ; “ you’re bravely welcome ! It’ll only tell you what this deed your partner has just signed would have told you. And now a dying man has told you, perhaps you’ll believe the lode’s worth a partnership ?”

As he said this, he took off his neckcloth, deposited his half of the paper in its recesses, and replaced it round his neck. Then he turned round angrily on the dying man.

“ You old lying viper—you old sinful buffle-head !” he said, kneeling on the bed. “ And so this is how you repay me for all my care ! Oh ! Satan ’ll sift you like wheat, he will—oh ! he’ll sift you ! You’re a backslider, you are, if ever there was one. After sixty years chapel and faithful ministry ; and summing it all up by telling my secrets to other people !”

As he poured forth these invectives, the old man raised himself slowly in the bed, stared in a troubled way first at Sampy and then at Mordred, gave a low cry of pain, waved back some imaginary being, or thing, with both hands, fell back on the bed ; one slight convulsion ; a faint movement of the hands, and the great change came. A gurgling sound in the throat, and the old miner had departed on his long journey. The eyes fixed, the jaw fell.

As Mr. Mordred was stooping to throw the sheet over the dead man's face, Bradbrain entered the room, and going to the bed, felt Roby's heart. The wonderful machinery of life had ceased to work, after seventy years of toil; soul and body had parted after a long companionship.

"He's wiped out," said the young doctor, with perfect *sang-froid*. "Mordred, you must hear Sampy's story about the lode. I've signed and sealed for you. I think it's all *bonâ fide* this time. It was deuced crafty of you coming to get it out of Roby; but you were a little too late, old fellow. Come in the other room, and Sampy will talk it over with us."

The three men left the room, now consecrated by the presence of death, and slammed the door behind them, as heartlessly as if they were merely three cattle-dealers retiring to discuss a bargain.

Roby might have been a dead dog for all they cared about him. All that Bradbrain said, tossing his thumb over his left shoulder as he spoke, was,

"*His* light is out."

The three men sat down together by the round table, with the plan of the mine before them, and eagerly discussed their bargain. Three fingers met together upon the greasy sheet of note paper. As the two speculators warmed under the heat of Sampy's eloquence, the Dowser grew more and more enthusiastic.

"I say it is a brave keenly lode, a champion lode. There was never such gossan yet without a good underlay; the copper will bring as much a ton as the Wheal Betsy; and there is good promise for tin, the Lord be thanked! I tell you the Lord has sent signs, and the blessed divining rod has told of it, too."

"Oh! hang the divining rod! Now, shut up about that," said Bradbrain; "there's humbug in the very name of it."

"You shall see," said the Dowser, "that with faith one can move mountains."

Sampy rose as he said this, and going to a corner of the room, came back in a moment with two dry hazel shoots, of about a year's growth, nearly three feet long, and tied together cross-ways at the root ends.

"The blessed rod," said Sampy, "may be of currant, oak, or pear tree; but we generally down here chooses hazel twigs; children are best for the blessed rod; but we must do it here by ourselves. There's filings of iron, tin, lead, silver, chalk, coal, and bones, pegged in the top, and the rod's good to discover copper and any metal that it does not itself contain. If I puts it under my arm, it spoils the blessed rod for finding all but water. It's good now to find copper or gold, for there's no animal thread about it."

"Try it, then," said Mordred drily.

"What's the use of wasting time, Mordred, with a parcel of d—— humbug like this!" said Brad-

brain, contemptuously. "Here's the proof I like; this lump of copper on the mantel-piece. What took me was what that old fellow in the bed-room there said. Now, come, you infernal old canting cheat; here's a sov. I put it down here, under my left foot. Sink me, if I don't give it you if I once see the rod turn down to it."

"That's a fair challenge, Mr. Sandoe," said Mordred, as Bradbrain shouted with laughter.

"Ebenezer!" groaned Sampy; and taking the cross rods, he held them in the air at an elevation of about seventy degrees, opening his hands, and raising the hazel-twigs with his middle finger only. "A copper lode," he said, "draws the blessed rod from iron, and gold draws it from copper. Lord be praised! yes, I begin to feel it work."

Already the rod was turning downwards, as if magnetically drawn.

"Curse you! what do you take me for?" said Bradbrain, snatching the divining rod from the hands of the Dowser. "Do you think I am one of those psalm-singing fools you preach to? Do you really suppose I am going to lose a real shiner in that way? No, not if I know it! Why, you old juggler, of course it works with you, because you know the trick of it; it's like the shilling on the thread that tells the time; why, any fool could work it."

"Oh! man of little faith," groaned the Dowser, "try it yourself. The rod does not need my hands

to guide it. It's the blessed angels as gave the rod to Moses that directs it. Try it!"

"Now, fair play, Bradbrain, and no cheating," said Mordred. "There may be something more than juggling in this—it's a very old belief among the miners in Cornwall."

"And who's going to cheat?" said Bradbrain, fiercely, as he turned back his large white shirt-cuffs, and, tossing back his jet-coloured hair, seized the rod by its two handles, and held it firmly at the angle Sampy indicated, planting his left foot firmly on the piece of gold.

For a moment or two the rod remained immovable; then it began to vibrate; a minute more and it turned downward, as if forced to the ground by some strong unseen hand, till it pointed directly to the concealed gold. Once in vain Bradbrain angrily forced it back.

"It's the pulse affects it somehow, I know," he said; but the next moment down went the rod again, slowly, but irresistibly.

Bradbrain threw the stick to the other end of the room in a rage.

"Well, it licks me, I confess," he said; "but so do chiselling card-tricks, and yet I know they are not supernatural. There, pick up the sov., Sampy, and much good may it do you. Blast you! you got the pull over me that time."

Mordred expressed his astonishment at the successful experiment, as Sampy pocketed the money and sang a short hymn.

The moment the two doctors were gone, Sampy started with much resignation for St. Petrock's, to order the cheapest coffin he could possibly procure for poor old Roby.

CHAPTER V.

THE BILLIARD-ROOM.

THE little dry diamond dust of the white frost had nearly all melted from the roads, except here and there, where the shadows of the hedges and of the red-berried mountain ash-trees rested, cool and dark. The sky, a royal blue, was unspotted by a cloud, except one or two little drifts to the east, and those were no larger than the wings of a dove; a soft mild wind shook the holly-boughs in the lieutenant's garden, and made the ivy sparkle and thaw.

King Pippin had been despatched to school in a Spartan way, very soon after daybreak, and the rest of the children were playing with Tom Bowling, the parrot, whose wire cage had been swung from the lower branch of a mossy apple-tree, below which Billy, the terrier, leaped, snapped, and barked around Mrs. Tolpedden, who, while teaching Bobby to walk, aided by little Susan, looked as fresh as a primrose, and as bright as a violet after an April shower.

A discharge of five guns had just announced to

a small part of Cornwall the birthday of Miss Kate Tolpedden, and the lieutenant was about to start for Endellion, having promised Teddy and Kate a sail, as the day was so fine, and Walker, the Preventive man, had promised to lend them his boat.

The air that November morning was full of pleasant autumn sounds. The wild pigeons were breathing out their long sweet tenor notes from the tops of the beech-trees; from the common came, every now and then, the burst of a gunshot, for Arthur was at rabbit-shooting among the furze; and from a distance the bells of St. Nectan were ringing for some rustic marriage with a pleasant silvery jangle that the sou'-west wind alternately softened or deepened as it collected or scattered the notes on their way to Tolpedden. The noisy, playful barking of Billy, and the clamorous laugh of the children, as they fed Tom Bowling with sections of brown winter apples, combined to swell the pleasant chorus.

The lieutenant was busy planting standard roses. He had dug pits for them along the edge of the lawn, especially round the front door. He was one of those men who mope over anything but active out-door employment. He looked quite young and hearty as he tossed up the fine black mould, and shouted to Katy and Teddy to bring the iron supporting rods, to wheel the barrow nearer, or to fetch the rake from the outhouse.

“Katy, you lazy little slut, look alive, and bring

me another rose-tree, and Paul's list of the names. Now, Polly, darling, read them out one by one."

Mrs. Tolpedden read them out in her pretty little affectionate way, and the lieutenant listened as an epicure would listen to a bill of fare.

"*Géant des Batailles*—brilliant crimson, shaded with purple, large, and very double."

"Ha! that's good. I remember it, splendid bloomer. That's A 1, Polly. Teddy, leave that rose-tree alone, or I'll rap your knuckles."

"*General Jacqueminot*—brilliant velvety red, large and double."

"I know him; but he's rather delicate—slow flowerer. Don't tease, Tom, I tell you."

"*La Rose des Roses*—blackish purple, dashed with scarlet. One of the best."

And so they went on, till the lieutenant exclaimed suddenly,

"Susan, bring my Bobby here for me to kiss him. Belay there, avast heaving, Polly, we must be off now. Katy, get your hat on; Teddy, go and take off your pin-before. Good-bye, Polly."

Almost the very moment that the lieutenant had shut the garden-door behind him, a boy's keen, bright-eyed, crafty face thrust itself over the high box hedge.

Susan gave a slight scream at this unexpected apparition; but Mrs. Tolpedden, giving her Bobby to hold, instantly darted forward and seized with anxious delight a little pink three-cornered note that the boy, without speaking, held towards her.

As the little messenger's head went down below the horizon of the box hedge, Mrs. Tolpedden, turning her back on Bobby, Susan, and poor Tom the parrot, and followed only by Billy, whose caresses, however, she did not heed, tore open the note and devoured its contents.

So absorbed was she, indeed, in the letter thus strangely conveyed, that she did not observe that Arthur had come in at the gate, and, gun in hand, was advancing towards her. When she saw him, she coloured deeply, and thrust the note into her pocket.

"Why, auntie, if it had been February I declare I should think I had caught you reading a Valentine. Do you know I've just been blowing up that impudent boy of Bradbrain's for sneaking about the stable looking for eggs. I don't like that boy. Has he been here?"

Mrs. Tolpedden coloured deeper than before, and, to hide it, stooped down to pat Billy, who was dancing for joy, and shaking his head in absurd sneezes, as he raced round Arthur's legs.

"Yes, he has been here. I wrote to Mr. Bradbrain about Bobby's throat, and to ask him whether I should give her a port-wine gargle; but there's good news for you, Arthur."

Perhaps Aunt Polly had a motive in changing the conversation—perhaps she wished really to please Arthur with the good news. Still more likely that, with true woman's curiosity, she wished to test the state of his heart, of which she had

some not altogether vague suspicions, for one need not be very old to know that the most cynical interpretations of a friend's action is not always the true one. Mrs. Tolpedden, to use an old Elizabethan simile, was like the lapwing, she was luring the pursuer from her young—she was luring Arthur from the detection of a dreaded secret.

“What is this great news, aunt? M. Chatelet's putting off my French lesson, or has Gipsy cast a shoe?”

“Better than that by far, Mr. Impudent. Miss Tregellas and Milly Waverton are going to drive over to have a lesson in billiards. They'll be here in half an hour, so go and get the table ready, Arthur, there's a dear. I did send Katy to tell Liddy to get the fire lit; look me out a light mace, Sir Hal. I thought that would please you. Take care, young man—take care!”

“Beware?”

“You know Longfellow's song?”

“Oh! there is no fear of me, aunt; I think I'm tolerably bullet proof—besides, Milly is half engaged to Trevena.”

“Oh! you artful, wicked boy! Who said anything about Milly? Lilly's not engaged, is she?”

“I really am not acquainted with the exact state of Miss Lucy Tregellas's heart.”

“Oh! there, go along, you wicked, deceitful fellow! I can see how the land lies!”

The billiard-room at Mr. Henry Tolpedden's

was a green-house, opening from the dining-room. The slanting glass roof was trellised by a spreading black Hamburgh vine, to whose dry flexible branches a few yellow leaves still adhered. There was a pleasant little fireplace just under the clock, and a series of Bunbury's caricatures hung round the walls.

When Lucy Tregellas and Milly Waverton arrived in the pony-carriage, and, joined by Mrs. Tolpedden, entered this cheerful and luminous room, they found everything prepared for the game. The maces and cues were out of the rack, the red ball was spotted in its solitary grandeur at the top of the table, and Arthur was trying a specially difficult cannon.

Lucy looked the very perfection of an English girl, in a well-made grey mohair dress, a plain white collar, and sleeves that, tightening towards the waist, terminated in the daintiest of little cuffs; while Milly, in dove colour, looked neat, pretty, and good-naturedly mischievous, as she always did, and served as an excellent foil to her prouder and more vigorously-minded friend.

Restless as butterflies, the two girls, in the gaiety and innocence of their hearts, skimmed round the room, practising various strokes, and trying for various pockets, laughing and challenging each other.

"Maces, indeed!—no, sir, no maces for us," said Milly, saucily; "I'm not a child, Mr. Tolpedden. There, Lucy, that's what I call a neat

losing hazard—now, then, for a cannon—oh ! that's nothing—let me have that stroke again. How should I do this—shall I screw it ?”

“ Hit your ball low, Lucy, on the right, and sharp,” said Milly, grandly, “ and it'll go in the middle pocket—bravo !—as I told you.”

“ You will play us three,” said Lucy to Arthur, as he pushed the markers and the scoring hand back to “ Love-love ;” “ Milly says we can give you ten. Spot the red ball, Milly—thanks.”

“ I will try you ; but it's fearful odds. Never mind, a brave man struggling with adversity is a sight beloved by the gods. Aunt Polly, you break—I follow, then come Miss Tregellas and Milly. Goodness gracious ! a fluke to begin with —aunt ! aunt !”

“ Fluke !—nonsense,” said pretty Mrs. Tolpedden, as by a lucky accident she sent the red ball into the left hand, and the white into the right pocket. You're a nasty envious fellow—a five stroke, Lilly.”

“ Five—love.”

“ You're always thinking of love, Arthur,” said wicked Aunt Polly, with a meaning look and arch smile at Lucy. “ The game is five, ten—we foolishly gave you ten.”

“ Well, I was foolish,” said Arthur, as Mrs. Tolpedden achieved a dashing cannon, and then gave a miss, at which she “ grisbeted,” as Milly called it.

“ It is now my innings,” said Arthur, as he

effected three eannons one after the other with skilful precision.

"Oh! I do hope he'll miss, don't you, Milly?" said Lucy, with one kind glance, that fell on Arthur soft as spring sunshine.

"Oh! so do I, awfully!" said Milly, clapping her hands, as Arthur got himself by accident into a corner top-pocket; "he's sure to miss when he goes up the board." But to her mortification Arthur made a cannon, and at the same stroke placed the red into a beautiful position over the middle pocket. On he went, in his laughing and triumphant career, making a break of sixteen, and then gave an intentional miss.

"Sixteen, five, is the score," cried Milly; "now, then, Lilly, for all you know. Keep the but-end of the cue lower, and run away with the game from this tyrant."

Arthur had now to instruct his adversaries. In what subtle ways love can show itself. It can give an inflection the thousandth part of a semitone, higher or lower. By a gesture that is, and yet is not, the same, it marks unconscious preference. To the loved face, the lover's eyes turn first on entering a room, and they fix on it last in parting. The faintest shadow of hope, of pleasure, or of jealousy, can they not be conveyed without a word in the million variations of love's marvellous deaf and dumb alphabet?

"High, to the right, and your ball will go in the right-hand pocket," said Arthur, as he

leaned over and explained the mysteries of the side stroke ; "you see, I knew you would do it, your eye is so true—now, then, at the red."

"What *shall* I do now ?" said Lilly, raising her eyebrows in the prettiest despair ; "I know I shall miss it."

"High and following," said Arthur ; "a sort of pushing stroke—don't draw the cue back—there—very good—capital!"

"Oh ! that's delicious, Lilly—go on !" cried Milly ; "do go on, make two or three more, there's a darling, and we shall beat him yet !"

"Now you must try a cannon, Miss Tregellas."

"Don't trust him, dear Lilly," cried Mrs. Tolpedden ; "he is telling you wrong on purpose."

"Oh ! no, he is not," said Lucy, flushed with triumph, as she rested in the very act of striking the spot ball, and looked full up into Arthur's face with eyes large, soft, and clear as those of a hare. I know not where to look for a more truthful simile.

Arthur laughed, and shook back his hair. He looked so handsome as he drew himself up in his grey shooting-jacket.

"Aunt Polly," he said, "that's too bad by half ; here have I been doing my best to make your side win, and now you run me down. Now, Miss Milly, for a round of brilliant flukes from you."

"Flukes, *indeed !*" and Milly flounced from the window where she had been chalking her cue with

practised skill ; “ now we’ll see what our side can do.”

“ How is your brother to-day ? ” inquired Arthur.

“ Oh ! dear fellow, he was very much shaken ; but he is pulling up now—he’s out to-day in the parish.”

“ It was certainly unwise of him, venturing to put down Guy Fawkes. Our Cornish miners are a fanatical race, they have a horror of innovations ; and they’re nearly all dissenters. It was very grand in Trevena braving them as he did.”

“ Oh ! yes, wasn’t it ? ” said Milly, her little eyes sparkling like those of a laughing bird—if birds ever do laugh.

“ I shall always love him for it,” said Lilly.

Arthur looked grave, and turned to score two for Milly’s first cannon.

“ The mob was led on by a man they call the Dowser. He goes about, they say, pretending to discover mines with a thing he calls a divining rod.”

“ I know the rascal,” said Arthur vehemently. “ I threatened to thrash him once for trespassing on the governor’s land. Find !—he’ll never find anything but the way to the House of Correction.”

“ Don’t be too hard on the poor fellow, Arthur,” said Mrs. Tolpedden, who was too good-natured to hurt even a robin wilfully ; “ perhaps the man is a little wanting in the upper story.”

“ Mamma is coming presently to drive to Bos-

castle," said Lucy, "with me and Milly. Will you come, Mrs. Tolpedden?—I'm sure Mr. Tolpedden will drive you?"

"I shall be only too proud," said Arthur.

"Are you practising for the cup, Mr. Tolpedden?" said Lucy, as Arthur, the conqueror, called out—"Twenty-eight—GAME!" much to Milly's vexation, and cries of—"Oh! what cheating!"—"Won by a fluke—shame!"

"I practise two or three times a week, in all weathers, and so does Bradbrain; but he is so crafty, he won't practise with me, for fear I should learn his dodges."

"Oh! Don—Mr. Bradbrain, I mean, is not crafty, Arthur," said Mrs. Tolpedden, warmly.

"Oh! of course you take Mr. Bradbrain's part," said Milly mischievously. "I hope it will be a nice party at Mr. Hookem's. I do hope, Lucy, there will be a dance."

"There is sure to be, Milly," said Mrs. Tolpedden, with the dignity of superior age, and a little tartly because she did not like the tone of Milly's banter. "I do like Mr. Hookem—don't you, Arthur?"

"I do indeed," replied Arthur; "he is a little pompous and fond of display, but he is so hospitable, very amusing, and an excellent host, for he never lets things flag; but, come, one more game before luncheon. I and Miss Tregellas against you, aunt, and Miss Waverton, and I'll give you five-and-twenty."

Just as Arthur turned to the scoring-board to arrange the odds, and call "Twenty, love," somebody passed the windows towards the front door, and knocked and rang.

"Who was that, girls?" said Mrs. Tolpedden, turning sharply round.

"I really think it was Mr. Mordred," said Milly.

"What on earth brings him here! My father can't bear that man," said Arthur; "and just now he is awfully busy with some discovery in chemistry he's hoping to make."

"Poor, dear man!" said Aunt Polly, with pity scarcely called for.

CHAPTER VI.

MR. MORDRED OPENS THE FIRST PARALLEL.

MR. HENRY TOLPEDDEN was a man of an iron resolution, which his military life had strengthened. You could see it in the firm grip of his mouth, when difficulties of even the smallest kind arose; you could read it in his unflinching eye, that, when stern, seemed to glow with a cold frosty light. Deep and ardent ambition, that no chills of the world could slacken, no rains of disappointment could quench, burned in his breast.

With no wife to wean him from study, and no

young children to educate, the student, in the solitude of his Cornish home, had set down at eight and forty to master the secrets of science. Always from boyhood a devoted reader of chemical books, the idea had struck him in early life that great discoveries might be made by bringing to light those mysteries that the alchemist so carefully concealed in cabalistic language.

A man of an eminently practical nature, not by any means disposed to waste life in day-dreams, and spurred on by an earnest fanaticism, Mr. Tolpedden had plunged into this labyrinth of old Arabic and mediæval learning, armed only with the talisman of hope, and the safety-lamp of the love of truth. He had not ventured there as into an enchanted country, but as into a wilderness beyond which, he believed, lay a region full of treasure. He despised the jargon of Paracelsus, and the gibberish of the Rosicrucians ; but he did not disdain the vast industry of these men, or their marvellous discoveries. He could not despise men who had first made chemistry a science, and who had reorganized the theory of medicine. He had read the alchemic writers from the time of Rhazes and Avicenna down to the pretenders whom Boerhaave exposed, and he had not found them unworthy of study.

Not that Mr. Tolpedden believed in the possibility of fixing mercury, or turning the baser metals into gold, but he did believe that Paracelsus and some of the profounder writers on alchemy had

left behind them secrets that had since been unheeded, although the clues to them still existed in the old folios that Ashmole collected. Their centuries of research as to the constituent parts of metals, in hopes of finding a common base, had led, he found, to various discoveries that it needed only modern science to render valuable.

A great scientific discoverer requires an active imagination, as well as a mathematical mind. Mr. Tolpedden had both requisites. Restlessly impatient of all claims to finality, seeing incessant change and progress written on every work of nature, he toiled on in search of one of those great discoveries that the future has in store for all sciences—taking nothing for granted, tabulating his daily experiments, slowly concentrating his conclusions around one hypothesis, that some day promised to become a truth.

From breakfast time to lunch (nine to two) no one ventured to disturb Mr. Tolpedden's studies. It was the rule of the house, and enforced rigidly by old Liddy, that no one, except the business was of great and pressing importance, was shown into the study or laboratory between those sacred hours. Not that Mr. Tolpedden was a mere lamp-dried bookworm, with no affection, no sense of home duties, and no passion left but a gloomy egotism, selfish and absorbing. He was no morbid thinker, who had mistaken the field of one science for the whole world. He was not the man to inflict on himself ascetic tortures, and to be laughed at in

consequence as a fool even by his own servants. His mind was perfectly healthy ; he did not in the least resemble Bulwer's, or I should rather say Sterne's, puzzle-headed sages ; on the contrary, he took his full share of the domestic and county duties of a wealthy country gentleman of the nineteenth century. He frequently appeared, hearty and sociable, at the covert side, with friends upon the stubble, on the Grand Jury, in the Board Room, and at the Petty Sessions. He took his fair share in society, both in giving and taking, but he did not lay himself out either as a sporting man, a politician, or a lady's man. His fine common-sense discerned at a very early age the absurdity of destroying one's brain to win a two-penny-halfpenny fame, or for the sake of a spoonful or so more of learning, to condemn oneself to perpetual imprisonment. He saw the danger of dwindling the body for the sake of strengthening the mind, when body and mind should run together and pull equally in the same harness. He knew well what an absorbing and dangerous form of selfishness is that into which the student often falls.

At his own hours he was, therefore, hermetically sealed from all intrusion, because, without a persistent sequence of thought, no result can ever be obtained from thinking. The rest of the day, like that model for all workers, Sir Walter Scott, he was easy of access. Liddy could come to him about the dinner ; Handsome Thomas, the coachman,

about the horses; Penrose, the gardener, about the fruit-trees, or the melon-beds; Roberts, the gamekeeper, about the pheasants. After tea he made it a rule never to enter the laboratory except during times of special study. He read the *Times*, the *Forge*, or scientific books, and drew or chatted while Arthur read, wrote, worked at his Greek or German, or played at ecarté with the lieutenant, or at draughts with Mrs. Tolpedden.

In a large room, looking out upon the garden, and crowded with Leyden jars, galvanic piles, jars of spirits and ethers, bulbous glass vessels, siphons, lamps, and retorts, Mr. Tolpedden was dissolving boracic acid in alcohol, when a knock came at the door, and Fanny announced a visitor.

Mr. Tolpedden, who had just procured a light green flame from a small cup in which the mixture was, and was now taking some spoonfuls of muriate of strontites from a deep glass bottle, did not look round, but growled.

"If it is Barker," said he, "tell him I can't see him now, he must go to Mr. Chetwynd, at Boscastle, he will arrange about the case."

"It's not him, sir."

"Then who in the name of goodness is it? Don't you see I'm busy? Whoever it is, tell him to come again."

"It's Mr. Mordred, sir, and he says he particularly wishes to see you on very pressing business."

Mr. Tolpedden turned round, with his hand full

of phosphuret of lime and oxymuriate of potash.

"Mr. Mordred!" he said. "Who sent for the man? I won't see him."

"But he won't take a denial, sir. Liddy told him you never saw any one from nine to two. He said he *would* see you, positive like—wouldn't keep you long, but he *would* see you; them was his words, zackly so."

"Would—would he! Well, show him in. I'll soon see who will and who won't, the cheating hypocrite!" said Mr. Tolpedden, in no very patent voice. "Fresh from some religious meeting, I suppose; he is always most mischievous then. I should like to know the antecedents of that fellow."

The angry student went on with his experiments with the utmost *sang-froid*. He dropped some pills of a mixture into a taper ale-glass, which he then filled with water.

At that moment the door opened again, and in came Mr. Mordred, bland and smiling, hat, black woollen gloves, and gold-mounted cane effectively arranged in his left hand. Fanny, as she shut the door, made a grimace behind his back.

"How do you do?—delighted to find you in, my dear Mr. Tolpedden," said the banker, in his monotonous, icy voice; "one moment's conversation, you know, is better than fifty letters. I was sure you were too busy to answer my letter. I know how one puts off business matters—do not for a moment apologise. And how are the new arrivals and your son?"

Mr. Tolpedden made no reply, but calmly put a funnel into the ale-glass, and poured down it five or six drops of sulphuric acid. Flashes of quick fire instantly darted from the surface of the water, and the bottom of the glass was illuminated by a beautiful green light.

As Mr. Mordred slid forward to shake his hand, the experimenter drew back, coldly bowed, and pointed to a chair. Mr. Mordred, to hide his vexation at this reception, advanced to the ale-glass and looked at the flame with quite an innocent delight.

"Wonderful! wonderful!" he said; "what progress science is making! What an admirable paper that was of yours, Mr. Tolpedden, at the last British Institution—you seem on the verge of certain, most important—nay, I may add, most profitable discoveries. What a remarkable experiment this seems that you're making?"

Mr. Tolpedden's proud upper lip curled, till it looked that of that arch-sneerer, Byron.

"This experiment?" he said, pointing at the flame; "oh! yes, it's fit for children. I've been trying to discover some artificial light for Lady Rostrevor's next private theatricals—she asked me the other day at Bodmin."

As he said this, Mr. Tolpedden, with irritating coolness, began mixing some crystals of the carbonate of barytes with alcohol. All at once he put down the bottle of alcohol, and drew a chair to the opposite side of a table facing Mr. Mordred.

These impulsive, sharp impulsive movements formed an intrinsic part of Tolpedden's character.

"Mr. Mordred," he said, sternly, "my time is, like your own, valuable. May I ask to what cause I am indebted for this unexpected visit?"

Mordred did not or would not see the sneer.

"My dear sir," he said, gathering himself up for action, "pressing business induced this call, for which I must apologise."

"To what business do you refer, sir?" said Mr. Tolpedden, sternly.

"To the business referred to in the letter written by one of my clerks to you, my dear sir, some weeks since, by my order."

No one could apply a caustic in a more gentle way than Mr. Mordred.

Mr. Tolpedden took some light-coloured liquid, mixed with nitrate of lead; he then introduced into it some bubbles of sulphureted hydrogen gas. The lead was precipitated; all the time he performed this experiment he continued talking.

"Ha! I remember," he said, somewhat superciliously, "something about the mortgage on my St. Juliet property?—the interest is somewhat in arrears. Why do you not see my lawyer, Mr. Chetwynd, about these things?—I leave them all to him."

"First, my dear sir, because he referred me to you; and secondly, because I did not wish to press the matter."

"Press the matter!—what do you mean by that offensive expression?"

"My dear sir, pray be patient. The richest noblemen in the land sometimes want ready money. I have known ladies of rank leave small debts unpaid for five years. It is no reproach."

"Reproach, sir! I am not accustomed to this tone of conversation."

"My dear Mr. Tolpedden, you are too inflammable. I do not come here with any intention of offending. My intention in coming here is—"

"Well, sir?"

"To propose to take, in exchange for the small sum owing to me, a piece of worthless, common land."

"What land?"

"A small piece of your own common land, a piece with a bad title—the surrender would prevent a chancery suit."

"A chancery suit!—who, may I ask, has a claim to any portion of my estate?"

"The corporation of Boscastle."

"Indeed!—one has to go far sometimes to learn news. Strange, too, that I never heard of this disputed claim! And may I also beg to know where this precarious land is?"

"On the cliff near Endellion. I want it to extend my little farm in that direction, and am willing to allow a handsome price for it—more, indeed, than it would ever fetch in the market."

The corporation will not, I am informed, dispute the claim if it is in my hands."

"*But will if it remains in mine*—an artful threat! No, sir," said Mr. Tolpedden, firing up; "you forget you are not talking to an impoverished speculator, or a small bankrupt tradesman. I have no intention at present of depriving my son of a single yard of land—what my father left me, he shall inherit. I want no huxtering. It is not necessary for us yet to take to peddling or barter of any kind. It is very kind of you to propose the transfer, but——"

At this moment the door opened, and in rushed Teddy and Kate, driven before him by the lieutenant.

"The lunch gong is just going, Harry," he said; "here, all hands 'bout ship. Beg pardon, didn't know you were engaged. Come along, Kate; Teddy, look alive, sir. Hookem's come to luncheon, Harry, and is talking away with ten-horse power."

As the excellent old officer drove out the children and shut the door behind him, the gong in the hall clashed and boomed out its brazen summons.

Mr. Tolpedden rose and pushed back some crucibles and glasses that stood before him.

"Mr. Mordred," he said sternly, every word coming from his lips cold, hard, and distinct as hail-drops, "I think, as you understand me, our interview may now close. You brought peace

and war ; I have chosen war, so war let it be. In a few days I will instruct my solicitors, Messrs. Fluker and Watson to pay the interest due to you. Good day, sir ; excuse my leaving you."

Mr. Mordred rose with a galvanized solemnity, not unlike a benumbed serpent. He had not expected such uncompromising defiance. He gathered together his fuzzy black gloves and his hat, as an undertaker collects the trappings of a completed funeral.

"Mr. Tolpedden," he said, "I *had* wished to avert this most unpleasant collision, but I must not, in doing my duty as a banker and man of business—I must not forget the duty I owe to the town of St. Petrock's, of which I am the Mayor. Depend upon it, this matter shall go into Chancery without delay."

Mr. Tolpedden rang the bell, and Fanny appeared.

"As you like," he said ; "good morning, Mr. Mordred."

"May the Lord soften this man's heart," said the banker in a low voice, as he bowed and followed Fanny to the front door.

"He's saying something against master," thought Fanny to herself as she closed the door, not unwillingly, upon the unwelcome and ominous visitor.

CHAPTER VII.

MR. TREVENA THROWS DOWN HIS GAUNTLET.

THE clerical readers of the *Bodmin Mercury* of November 10, 1862, were electrified over their tea and toast to find in that flimsy sheet, still damp from the press, a second, most audacious letter, addressed to the Bishop, dated "St. Petrock's," and signed "John Frederick Trevena." Toadying rural deans and courtly examining chaplains nearly fainted at the audacity and recklessness of a shameless Low Churchman. Parasitical dwellers in the Close at — could hardly believe their own eyes when they consulted the Clergy List and found that this Knox of Cornwall was only a perpetual curate; as for that ungrateful the Rev. Mr. Bernard Waverton, he openly regretted that the Ecclesiastical Court could not strip off Mr. Trevena's gown for such infamous treason against church discipline. Even the friends of the writer shrugged their shoulders, sipped their tea, and lamented the step as "unwise and wrong-headed."

The simple-hearted letter was certainly not calculated to ensure preferment. It ran thus:—

"St. Petrock's, near Boscastle,
"November 8th, 1862.

"**MY LORD,**

"I cannot forbear offering some remarks on your late charge, but I trust that the spirit of

peace may guide my pen, while I write what my conscience forbids me to keep silent.

“It is a fact that great numbers of the clergy and laity have, since 1840, left the Church of England and joined the Romish Church.

“It is too evident that the Sacramental and Ceremonial system in our Church, which is carried out in some dioceses much more than in others, has promoted this lamentable result.

“The processions on various occasions on opening churches, &c., in this diocese, appear every year to be more and more accompanied with outward pomp of banners and other things, too much like the custom of the Papal Church.

“The encouragement also given to choral services in parish churches, which now assume quite a new feature in our Church, does away with the simplicity of our Protestant worship.

“Your late Charge has greatly alarmed many of the clergy and laity in your diocese, more especially as its tendency has been considered to encourage the monastic system, which your recommendation of the ‘Retreats’ for the clergy manifestly shows. Your words are, ‘The question has more than once been suggested to me whether I should devise any plan by which my clergy might thus have the benefit of such religious retirement, or, as it is more technically called, of a ‘Retreat,’ and I feel, I own, that ere this I ought to have given some definite and favourable answer to such a question.’

“This plan is understood to be, that clergymen

are for a time to go to another clergyman's house, and that certain rules shall be carried out there, analogous to those encouraged in the monastic system. We have seen, at Leeds and other places, that the result has been to lead many clergymen to be perverts to the Roman Catholic Church.

"Your remarks on the reunion of Christendom, it is much to be feared, may produce in the minds of many a disposition to swerve from the inflexible holding of all those sound principles brought out at the Reformation, and embodied in our Thirty-nine Articles; remembering as we do that our Protestant Church was founded, under God, upon a renunciation of Rome. Your words are, 'I think, also, that no one can have read the works of M. Renan without feeling that he, by his infidel encroachments on the inheritance which we share with the Church of France' (when I heard the Charge it was the Gallican Church of France that was mentioned), 'has, by creating a sympathy which attends upon a united resistance to a common danger, contributed something towards removing the barriers which have long parted us from that celebrated communion.'

"My Lord, it is with the sincerest reluctance that I venture to address to your lordship even these few and simple words of remonstrance. Had I not the most heartfelt admiration of your zeal and of your Christian warmth of heart, I should have held my tongue, however painful the novelties you had forced upon the diocese.

“But fearful lest my silence, and that of my brother ministers might be misconstrued into approval of such measures, and remembering still more those words of God, ‘Touch not, taste not, handle not,’ I cannot refrain, lest even the very stones cry out, from imploring you, in the name of Him who died for us upon the tree, to pause before you try to lead us, your children in Christ, further from the fold; lest, my Lord, at that awful day, when the just are summoned before the great white throne, and him that sitteth thereon, some of those who were entrusted to your special care be found among the castaways.

“I remain,

“Your Lordship’s faithful servant,

“JOHN FREDERICK TREVENA.”

Mr. Hookem read this letter with considerable admiration for the courage of the writer. But being himself a *very* Broad Churchman, and not, being, apart from social controversy, by any means interested in religious subjects, by which his own vanity and importance could not indeed in any way be fed, he dismissed the matter from his mind as soon as he had written to London for a sarcastic, hair-splitting article for the *Forge* upon the subject. This article, entitled “Extremes,” went to show how absurd all fixed principles were, how untruthful and dangerous all violence, whether for black or white, really was; and how

foolish, in the eyes of the world, any desire for proselytism appeared.

The *Trimmer*, of course, had a leader on the same subject—a good, classical, heavy article it was, written in an hour; but weighty enough to have taken a year. Its writer, also, ridiculed fanatical excesses, jeered at mere Church furniture, and steering cautiously between the two sections; appealed to the common sense of the large neutral party, to restrain, by ridicule and passive resistance, the injudicious zeal of certain bishops.

The *Trimmer* was always singularly desirous to be with the majority.

CHAPTER VIII.

A FAIR in a village makes some stir, an election in a county town is noisy, a marriage in a small house is exciting, and the reading banns in a county church creates some anticipation.

But the letting the animals out of Noah's Ark itself could not have been a more noisy or a more exciting business, or created more anticipation, than did the preparations for Mr. Hookem's farewell party at St. Petrock's. Most villages have some Lord Fitzboodle, or Squire Fitztoddle, near them, whose ways and doings they can criticise, whose stinginess they can ridicule, whose game-preserv-

ing they can satirise, whose hospitality they can blame or praise; but St. Petrock's was a retired little place, in a strange, lonely county, and the inhabitants having nothing better about which to talk, chattered of their illustrious epicurean and expensive visitor, and that was just what he liked.

Never had there been such feasting, at least so said the oldest inhabitant, Mrs. Tomkin, at the Alms-houses, and her statement was confirmed by old Penrose of Bosinna, who remembered Lord Wharncliffe's doings, and had reached a fabulous age, at least according to his own account. The country had been scoured for chickens as far as the "Cheese-Wring;" emissaries had been sent for the largest prawns as far as Crockerton Cove. The finest turbot were to be procured from Port Isaac, and a village beyond St. Agnes Head. Lobsters of a special age were culled from the wells of the boats in Boscastle; venison and truffles were sent for all the way from Exeter. The mounted messengers of the Sultan Editor, in fact, crossed and recrossed each other in all parts of the county, swift as weavers' shuttles.

Mr. Hookem, though lavish with money, took a delight in planning all these reconnoiterings, and in getting them performed, not merely in the most expeditious, but in the cheapest possible way. His maxim was to get everything of the very best, but yet not to throw away a single farthing uselessly. He rejoiced in display, and revelled in pompous

hospitality ; but he was not fool enough to squander money purposelessly. He wished to return the kindness and attention shown him, and he also wished to make the return a splendid one ; but nevertheless he carefully calculated the cost, and we like him none the worse for it. It is so easy to be liberal with other people's money—so easy to preach popularly on charity, and yet to put nothing into the plate ; but not so easy to be generous and hospitable when we might be mean and saving.

There was one great difficulty the entertainer had to encounter, and at first it did not seem possible to overcome this, even by a lavish expenditure of money. The rooms over the post-office were snug, but they were small. Where in St. Petrock's, or where nearer than Boscastle, were there to be found rooms sufficiently large to dine, dance, and ^{sup} twenty or more people ? Why, even Jackson did not know, although his master had long ago erased the word "impossible" from his limited dictionary.

At Boscastle the editor might have at once hired the Assembly Rooms ; a few festoons of chintz and calico, some laurel-boughs, more gas-burners, and a bushel or two of muslin flowers, would soon have metamorphosed that mouldy apartment into a hall of dazzling light ; but then Boscastle was not St. Petrock's, nor was either place movable, like Birnam Wood.

The nodus of difficulty had at last been cut through by Arthur's quick, keen mind, not altogether unaided by Jackson's small but active brain.

It had suddenly occurred to young Tolpedden, who had felt that he had any amount of "tin" and energy, or "go," as he called it, to back the wildest proposal, that by hiring the chief inn at St. Petrock's for two days, clearing away settles, &c., and knocking down a few lath and plaster partitions, a large apartment might be secured for a dinner, dancing, and cards, setting apart a small parlour for the coffee, and for the ladies' retiring-room.

Hookem was delighted; he rejoiced, not only in having elbow-room for his hospitality, but also in the display and the surprise he could secure by such means. At it he went head-foremost, in his own robust and business-like way. He always tried to secure quickness and economy. He wanted to show the Cornish men how a Londoner could make a bargain, and yet how magnificent he could at the same time be. He was a hard-working man on the treadmill of the London press; but this was his holiday time, and he disported himself like a gambolling whale.

A week had passed in these festive preparations, and now all was ready; the last cart from Bodmin Road Station had been unpacked; the last nail of the carpenter's work knocked in, the last garland of holly hung upon the walls. The bell might ring now when it chose for the music to strike up. The St. Petrock's people had already begun to congregate round the illuminated inn door, and discuss the guests with a bemuddled wonder. The

noise of hurried wheels began to sound in the distance. The turbots lay broad and white in the boiling fish-kettles; the jellies were being turned out, golden, and quivering at what they had gone through. The candied fruit sparkled like Aladdin's jewels in the splendid dessert dishes. The newly-arrived waiters were gathered round a great silver dish, full of rose-water, and wondering if anybody was going to be christened. The first act of the play was, in fact, about to commence.

Mr. Hookem had just tied with intense care the thinnest possible string of white cambric round his bull neck, when the first knock came.—(N. B. —The knocker had been put up for the occasion.) Mr. Hookem, too old a stager to be ever flurried, did not hurry, but with the mechanical exactness of instinct, slipped into his pocket his £60 gold hunter watch (Frodsham), dexterously buttoned his enormous white waistcoat, tossed some frangipani on his snowy handkerchief, and descended as from the cloudy top of Olympus into the drawing-room, at the end of which hung a broad red curtain, to screen off the dining-table.

Worthy Mr. Trevena, and his stern sister, Mr. Bradbrain, Mr. Mordred, and the Penroses, were already there. The ladies were taking off their bonnets upstairs. It was delightful to see how Hookem's patent boots glided about, accompanied by a somewhat globose body, and how he welcomed and joked everyone, till perfect electrical good-humour and pleasant anticipation seemed to

fill the room through which a vaporiser had already disseminated a delicious perfume. A gentle sound of jingling silver and tinkling glasses oozed through the screen, like the tuning up for pleasant music. If the mind only got its fair share, the body was safe for enjoyment that evening. Rattle, brattle! crunch, rattle! came more wheels.

“Mr., Mrs., and Miss Tregellas!” shouted Jackson, in true Belgravian and heraldic manner; and just as Mr. Hookem got to the entrance, in came the party, Mr. Tregellas looking grave and uncompromising; Mrs. Tregellas was pleased, and not quite so preoccupied as ordinarily, for her she was unusually dressy, for she displayed a scarlet satin scarf, trimmed with swansdown. As for Lilly, she looked more beautiful and bewitching than usual. She wore a straw-coloured *barege* (I mention this to pacify my female readers), cut low, and trimmed with blue ribbon, in all sorts of puffs and *ruches*; and yet no more overdone than if the dress had been fashioned for a countess. Her hair, *blonde dorée*, as enthusiastic hair-dressers, I believe, call such an angelic tint as Lilly’s, was drawn back from her face and looped up at the back under a broad golden comb; while her fair head was bound with a blue ribbon snood, a fashion that made her look something between a maid of Athens and Burns’s Mary Morrison, yet, to tell the truth, far more beautiful than either.

Behind the Tregellas party came the pupils,

Fitzhugh, Maclean, and Lucas, all fashionable in dress, off-hand in manner, and determined to show the Sultan editor and the Cornish guests that this was by no means their first appearance in society.

Lucy's quick eye had already cast somewhat anxious glances around the room, as if in search of some possible guest, when Jackson, intensely Belgravian, in canary-coloured pluses and cinnamon-coloured livery, slid into the room, and shouted with fashionable indifference, "Mr. and the Miss Wavertons!"

A slight expression of disappointment came over Lucy's face as Mr. Waverton entered with his three sisters in full sail; but her eye brightened as Milly darted towards her, and kissed her, and said under breath, "Oh! Lilly, you do look so lovely in that dear barége!" As for Milly's sisters, they were perhaps a little overdone with flowers and clouds of muslin, and wreaths composed of sticky green leaves, and unknown flowers, after the manner of a certain age that, it must be allowed, often requires much garnishing.

At last in came the Tolpeddens—Mr. Henry Tolpedden earnest and thoughtful, taking in everybody in the room in a few quick glances; the old lieutenant, hearty and brusque as usual; his little wife gayer, laughing even more than customary, and not quite oblivious to Mr. Bradbrain having vacated a chair beside Lucy Tregellas, in the most gallant manner, on purpose to make room for her. As for Arthur, he looked as tall, and strong,

and handsome as ever, but far more graceful and slender; that was the effect of dressing in black. He wore no ornaments, but some opal studs, and a watch-chain, massive, but not ostentatiously thick; no foppery of worked shirt fronts, or silk-lapelled coat, or advertised wealth, indicated a love of display. With perfect ease, and yet with the radiant face and the frank warmth of nineteen, he passed round the room, shaking hands, bowing, and interchanging inquiries. Quite naturally, as it seemed, when he reached Miss Tregellas, he remained in the group near her. No one could have perceived without a suspicious care that his bow to her was deeper or more expressive than it had been to others, or that he took her frankly-proffered hand with more pleasure than he had done that of Milly.

Just as the last guest arrived, pouring forth endless apologies for being late, Jackson announced dinner. For some minutes before Mr. Hookem had been sliding about the room, informing the gentlemen whom they were to take down to dinner. To Arthur Miss Tregellas was allotted, the lieutenant took down Miss Honoria Waverton, an enthusiastic though not youthful creature, while the host himself offered his arm, in his Ellistonian manner, to Mrs. Tregellas. Mr. Bradbrain did not secure Mrs. Tolpedden, but he took in Miss Trevena, and to his delight and surprise found Mrs. Tolpedden, whose *naïveté* seemed to charm him, on his left-hand side. As for Mr. Mordred, whom Mr. Tre-

gellas had only deigned to acknowledge with the coldest and slightest of bows, he conducted to the banquet—to use a theatrical synonym for a dinner—Miss Richards, a showy, talkative, black-browed girl, who was staying with the Wavertons.

And a very pleasant, merry, chatty dinner-party it was, now that the gentlemen had wedged their way into their places, and everybody had settled down into line of battle.

"I can't apologize, Tolpedden, for doing away for once with the cold Russian dinner," said Mr. Hookem. "I like, myself, the old hearty carving; when friends are dining together, one can watch the tit-bits for them. It takes away my appetite not seeing the joint."

"Ah! I remember you wrote an ode against it last year, when you dined with us," said Mr. Tolpedden. "You turned that ode of Horace, 'Per-sicos odi, puer, apparatus.'"

"Let me see, how did it run?

'I hate the Russian dinner, John,
And fuss and chilly pomp detest;
Remove that mountainous *epergne*,
A rose or two were far the best,
To grace our board, &c., &c.'

and so on. But the ladies will scold me if I let the soup get cold while I repeat my doggerel. Miss Honoria Waverton—no soup? Now I must beg of you to taste this rabbit soup, it is made from a receipt, of which, as a professed epicure, I am especially proud. By-the-bye, Trevena, when are

you going to get a new peal of bells for St. Petrock's? I never did hear such organized discordance as came forth from your belfry on Guy Fawkes' day. And talking about great church bells, Trevena——”

“John, Mr. Hookem is asking you a question about the St. Petrock's bells,” said Miss Trevena, sharply, from across the table, where she was condescending to Lucas, who was secretly cursing his stars at having got next such a harridan.

Mr. Trevena looked up rather guiltily, for he was entirely intent on a low-toned and apparently very interesting conversation that he was carrying on with Milly Waverton.

“Eh!—what? I beg your pardon. Yes, Mr. Hookem, I didn't hear you,” he said, somewhat confusedly. But Arthur had already sprung good-naturedly to the rescue.

“A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.”

“You know what the old rector at St. Advent, Hookem, used to declare they said?” suggested Arthur. “It was ‘Hang Tom Paine! Hang Tom Paine!’”

“Why, that's like two sets of village bells I used to know in Wiltshire, Arthur,” replied Hookem. “One set of three used to say, ‘Who'll help we? Who'll help we?’ and the two bells in the next village used to reply gruffly, ‘We wool! We wool!’ But that charming modern poet, Littlemore, has said all this better for us.

'The Sabbath bells across the down,
Are calling to each other now;
I hear them clamouring from the town,
I hear them from the hill's green brow.

Rising and falling, loud, then faint,
They chase the joy-song of the lark,
As sharper, quicker, their deep plaint,
Chides first the parson, then the clerk.'"

"I don't know that I admire Littlemore quite so much as you do, Hookem," said Mr. Tregellas.
"It seems to me that he writes too much like improvisation. Why 'deep plaint,' for instance?"

"Good Heavens! just hear that, Miss Waverton; hear that, Arthur! Why 'deep plaint?' And this is the nineteenth century. (Jackson, see that the champagne and moselle are got ready, we shall want them in a moment.) Why, you heretic, doesn't the bell go quicker and sharper when it is time for the parson to arrive? And you a parson!"

"Well, it certainly does; but still I don't like the verses."

"Ha! the old Dr. Fell reason over again—a mere excuse for prejudice. Why, the beauty of Littlemore is that he turns the commonest things to poetry; for instance,

'I rip the stubborn envious wire
That prisons in the bulbous cork,
And lo! as sudden as a fire,
The scented foam is all at work.

Then, fountain-like, it bursting springs
(A harmless pistol, bulletless),
And out the yellow nectar flings
Its floods of sparkling happiness.'"

"Now, I think you are parodying him," said Fitzhugh, laughing. "No man could ever write such turgid nonsense as that upon the simple fact of opening a bottle of champagne."

"No! no! no!—couldn't possibly!" cried Bradbrain and Arthur together.

"Well! well! gentlemen," said Hookem, with a mock deprecation, in which fun and irony were mingled with adherence to a preconceived opinion, "it is not for me to resist such a strong majority, but you will perhaps allow me to retain my own opinion. It will be many years before we see a poet arise equal to Littlemore; yet with that great man's name I must couple that of Whetstone."

"And who is Whetstone?" cried several voices.

"The author of the 'Babyloniad,' a poem from which I will read some quotations after dinner. Mr. Mordred, allow me to help you to a little bit more turbot. Jackson, hand Miss Tregellas the lobster sauce. The most extraordinary poem, I say, of this age. Talk of your Tennysons!—pshaw!—Whetstone alone understands the wants of the nineteenth century, and boldly attempts to supply them. By-the-bye, Miss Tregellas, I hope you are not going to eclipse our Cornish sunshine by going to encounter the dangers of London?"

"I am not going to leave home again yet," said Lucy. "But why, Mr. Hookem?—what dangers?"

"What dangers! Why, no street's safe now from these abominable escaped convicts, these blood-thirsty garotters. The Hon. Mr. Digweed writes to me that the shops are full of watchmen's rattles, bowie knives, spiked sticks, life-preservers, and even silver whistles for ladies to give the alarm with."

"Shocking!—horrible!" groaned the ladies.

"The last news is that at six in the evening a medical student in Bloomsbury Street was actually attacked and robbed, and had his face beaten in by ruffians with a knuckle-duster. So much for lenity to convicts, so much for the new police!"

"We shall have to fall back on Lynch law," said Bradbrain, half savagely, and between his teeth.

"Yes! to the yard-arm with them!" said the lieutenant, helping himself to potatoes.

"Oh! don't be so horrid, Nel," said his wife, shuddering, and reprovingly looking across at her worthy husband from several seats higher up.

"The remedy is education," said Mr. Mordred, with calm authority. "We must reach the benighted, heathenish people's children by education—religious education."

"Yes; and in the meantime be garotted by the fathers," said Bradbrain, rather sneeringly.

"I've resolved on my campaign," said the host,

who prided himself on promptitude in all emergencies; as he spoke, glancing at his guests with a triumphant and almost superhuman self-approbation. “I shall have a strong steel spike attached to my umbrella, which I shall carry habitually, especially in the evening, on the way from my office, slanting over my right shoulder. This, I think, will stop the garotter’s arm, or if he doesn’t see it in time it will deprive him of the sight of one or both of his eyes.

“Oh!” groaned Miss Tregellas, covering her face with her little hand, at which Arthur made her laugh by telling her, in a low voice, that no thief would possibly dare to attack the editor of the *Forge*.

“Oh! pray don’t—pray don’t talk of these horrid things!” supplicated Milly Waverton, her hands together.

“Perhaps Mr. Hookem will oblige us with a lecture on the various modes of punishment by death,” suggested Miss Trevena, as she drank her champagne spitefully, as if it was medicine.

By this time the turbot had disappeared, and the venison and boiled turkey were now brought in.

“Carlyle has treated the matter very boldly,” said Mr. Tolpedden, who had hitherto been rather *distract* and silent. “He is for employing convicts in road-making, drainage, the making of harbours, and the cultivation of moors—as he would also employ our idle soldiers; but even this plan has

difficulties. We are like a small army who have taken prisoners a larger force than our own, and we don't know what to do with them. The difficulty is, without a sort of quasi slavery to employ state workmen on private works."

"But slavery is popular in England now," suggested Arthur, bitterly. "Certain races, you know, were destined to be ruled by others."

"Undoubtedly they were," said Mr. Bradbrain. "The negro and the convict are unimprovable, and must therefore be conquered and restrained."

"Oh! you don't really think so?" said Lucy, turning her eyes with a look of searching, but sad inquiry, and fixing them for a moment upon Arthur's face; "oh! you cannot be so cruel as to think so!"

How unnecessarily vehement Arthur became in his own defence! It was a delightful torture to be accused of inhumanity by such a judge—still more exquisite because it was preceded by pain, the pleasure of seeing in the beautiful eyes of such a judge the written verdict of acquittal. Is it any wonder, tell me, ye who have loved, that he wished that that trial might only cease to be followed by an endless acquittal.

"Do you really believe, Miss Tregellas, that I could be cruel?" asked Arthur, in a voice tuned to that perfect, low, deep harmony that only love in one of its many stages of miraculous growth can elicit. It was the voice of the heart, not of the brain. It was not a self-confident

interrogation, but he spoke with an earnest anxiety, that came from the soul, and expressed a fear, but not an unmanly fear, that was more chivalrous and more graceful than any audacity. No one heard the question, because it was said as Arthur bent forward to help the lady next him on the other side to some blanc-mange, and he spoke in a low, subdued tone.

Lucy replied in a tone that in itself expressed conviction.

“No, I do hope you would not—I think you would not.”

“By-the-bye, Hookem,” said Mr. Tolpedden, “how do you get on with your Guy Fawkes book? Is your hero’s complexion brightening, or do the spots still resist your scouring soap?—you must really call me in as your scientific adviser.”

“Champagne, sir?” said Jackson, who seemed to encourage all speakers by instantly filling their glasses all round, and who seemed hurt and discouraged when Mr. Tolpedden refused his proffer.

“I have every hopes of rehabilitating that great man,” replied Mr. Hookem, grandly, and quite seriously. “Bacon has been proved to be no time-server, and above bribes; Richard III. has been shown to be as straight as an arrow; Mr. Froude has demonstrated that Henry VIII. divorced his wives for the most patriotic reasons; Mr. Ruskin has explained that Turner was a curmudgeon on the soundest principles; and now I

will vindicate the fame of this great scientific experimenter. Sir, I tell you that those barrels in the Westminster cellar did not contain gunpowder."

"Not gunpowder?" said Bradbrain; "why, what then, in the name of wonder?"

"What, then?—why, a new description of fulminating mercury, of such power that even a handful would have uprooted London and destroyed whole armies."

"Why, then, waste so much?" suggested Fitzhugh, with a pinching and rather triumphant smile, for he had not yet forgiven the picnic.

"Why?—why, to prove more thoroughly that war was now abolished, and to celebrate his own discovery and his own death with a royal salute; a useless House of Commons sent to the moon was to be the price of such a stupendous invention."

A *feu-de-joie* of laughter greeted this somewhat wild theory.

"Well, but you know," said the tenacious Fitzhugh, "the rascal had planned his escape, and had a boat ready at the water-stairs."

"Mere scandal."

"Well, but you will allow this, Mr. Hookem, that in his confession he avowed fanatical reasons, and said with brass enough for a Mutius Scævola, 'I meant to blow the Scottish beggars back to their native mountains!'"

"Sir, I doubt it—I very much doubt it," replied the stubborn disputant; "no, sir, that great, that immortal Yorkshireman I refer to, Fawkes,

Guido Fawkes, was not going on the brink of death to betray the great discovery, which he had consecrated to the cause of his church. His embassy in Madrid, his wars in the Netherlands, his midnight conferences in Butcher Row, his hidings in priests' lurking-places, were not to end in a cowardly and base surrender—(Jackson, Moselle to Mrs. Tregellas);—but depend upon it, sir, the secret did not perish—no, of course it was whispered to some subtle, faithful Jesuit, who bore it away and hid it in a religious house, and some day—*le bon temps viendra*—though you and I do not live to see it, depend upon it the secret will come out into Heaven's sunshine."

Mr. Hookem here took breath, and then took some wine.

"There certainly lie hid in chemistry the germs of explosive compounds, and subtle poisons more terrible and deadly than any yet known," said Mr. Tolpedden; "that I must say for Hookem's theory—but of course he's joking."

"Never more serious in my life, Tolpedden. Do let me help you to one slice more venison, Mrs. Tolpedden?—come, just to keep me company."

"By-the-bye, did you read of that curious discovery of another mine the other day in California, Mr. Hookem?" asked the bluest of the Miss Wavertons.

"What, about the hunter falling and catching at a bush to save himself?"

"Yes."

"What was the story?" inquired Arthur.

"Why, simply this—a hunter falling, caught at a bush on the mountain side; it did not save him, and he fell still clutching it. When his companion found him in the ravine he was dead, but the bush was still in his hand, and to the roots there hung some spangles of silver ore. This of course led to a search higher up the crag, and there a silver mine has now been discovered."

"A Yankee lie, I'll bet a cool thousand," said Bradbrain, not altogether liking the turn the conversation was taking.

"Do Yankees lie more, then, than other people?" asked Mr. Waverton, in a thin, helpless voice.

"Certainly they do, a good deal more," replied Bradbrain, severely; "I ought to know—but they can't help it."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Tolpedden, "how can they do it? How very wrong!"

"The most truthful man I ever knew was a Yankee supercargo at Port-Royal," said the lieutenant, emphatically.

"Then I dare say he found honesty profitable," suggested Bradbrain, amiably, "he perhaps took truth as a tonic to set him up for a second course of lying."

"Oh! mines," said Mr. Tolpedden, "have been discovered, as we well know, in the most remarkable ways. The divining rod is of course an im-

posture, but mines have been found by children digging, by explosions, by Will-o'-the-wisps, by meteor lights, by rabbit burrows, even by breaking chance stones."

Mordred and Bradbrain looked at each other—the one reddened with vexation, the other turned greenish pale from suspicion and fear. This line of conversation must be stopped, come what may.

"Oh! if you once get at mining in a Cornish party," said Bradbrain with jovial effrontery, "it is all over with it."

And here he assumed a comical despair, helping himself to some Neuchâtel cheese that one of Jackson's satellites at that moment proffered him.

"I think Bradbrain is right," said Mr. Tolpedden; "I don't know much good mining talk ever does, except to light up one's cupidity, and kill all other conversation."

"I want to trespass on Mr. Bradbrain," said Miss Trevena, "if he will be good enough, for that excellent story he was telling at our house the other day of the Bodmin Election in the old times."

"Oh! it was a mere nothing," said Bradbrain deprecatingly, with the true coquettishness of a professed teller of anecdotes.

The ladies at once opened upon him a battery of requests, to which he complied by laughing, placing his hand on his heart, and bowing in the direction of Mrs. Tolpedden.

"Oh ! if that's it I can't refuse, can I ? Well, the story is briefly this——"

"Jackson, *will* you keep that door shut at my back?" thundered Mr. Hookem, nodding majestical approval, and instantly relapsing into a majestic and apologetic silence.

"Is briefly this—Forty years ago, when bribes were still given at elections, and voters had not yet ceased to be corruptible, the little pocket borough of Bosinna—a village with about thirty inhabitants —became vacant. Two candidates came forward, one was Tory, the other of course a Whig (there were no Liberals then)——"

"A pity there are now," muttered the lieutenant.

"Lord Wharncliffe backed one, Lord Rostrevor the other. A short time before the election took place, the Tory candidate, Lord Wharncliffe, who was the great man of the place, began to build ten small stone cottages, in order to fill them craftily with fresh electors on his own side of the question. The roofs of the new tenements were just on, the floors down, the new inhabitants were ready to come in, and the vexed Whigs were pretty sure how the election must go. What was still more aggravating was, that but for these reinforcements the majority had been secured for Lord Rostrevor, at a considerable outlay. All was despondency among the outwitted Whigs, till one night, three days before the election, there bore down on the village thirty miners from Truro. They had their gads,

picks, and crows with them, and plenty of blasting powder. Well, there they came, and began digging and scooping under the new cottages, looking for metal, as the captain said. Presently they blew a horn, telling everybody to keep within doors if he wished to be safe, as they had found it necessary to begin blasting. Presently bang! in the air went every one of all the ten new cottages, and out ran the villagers, who began to smell a rat. Then the captain got on the mound where they chair the new members, and told them he was very sorry to say that the search for metal had been hitherto unsuccessful, but that they were now going to try the hill above the town. And so they did try, and lit a bonfire there, and let off blasts of powder, as much as to say, ‘See how we’ve bamboozled you?’ The Tories did all they could to make up for the march stolen on them; they bought farmers’ houses worth £20 for £90 each, but it wouldn’t do at any price, and at the election soon after, in came the Whig candidate by a majority of fifteen. An action was brought against Lord Rostrevor, and he had to pay some hundreds for the blown-up cottages, and that and the miners’ pay cost something; but he won the election for all that, and that’s all he cared for.”

“How charmingly Mr. Bradbrain tells a story!” said Miss Waverton, across the table, quite loud, to Arthur, charitably hoping to annoy him by disapproving some one else. But Arthur baffled her, for he was loud in his praise of his dashing friend.

By this time the table groaned under the costliest of desserts, and all sorts of wines, including even a bottle of princely Tokay from Prince Metternich's own cellar.

"I never can make out Bradbrain's politics," said Mr. Hookem. "Can you, Mordred?"

Mordred, speaking slowly, as if it gave him actual pain, said he really could not, never could, thought he never should.

"I am a Philosophical Liberal," said Bradbrain, in his audacious way. "Arthur knows my politics well enough; we often put on the gloves about politics. He's all for the poor; I'm for extending the power of the middle classes; they are the pith and marrow of England. Mrs. Tolpedden, you must—you really must, to oblige me, taste this Tokay."

"Well, just a very, very little."

"That is to say," said Mr. Tolpedden, "that he is for extending, as much as possible, the power of his own class. Well, that is, no doubt, the secret principle of most parties."

"I am for widening the basis of the governing classes, and dividing with the aristocracy the profits of governing. Let the poor man wait and improve himself, and learn how to use a vote before he gets one."

"Didn't you sympathize with us in our escape from those dreadful people, Mr. Hookem?" said Miss Honoria Waverton. "Oh! poor Frederick, how it did shake his nerves!"

Frederick sipped his wine, and denied the shock.

Mr. Hookem eyed him with the good-humoured mischief with which a man of the world observes an enthusiastic youngster ; he passed the decanters, and at the same moment begged Mr. Trevena to help Miss Milly Waverton to that mixed Chinese preserve opposite Mr. Tolpedden, which Mr. Trevena did, with many apologies.

"I should have thought," said Mr. Hookem, "that your new Saint Lucifer would be a *match* for five thousand Ranters."

Faint groans and laughter from the ladies ; but Mr. Waverton looked angrily at Mr. Trevena, who was laughing in his usual loud, hearty way.

"He didn't come up to the *scratch*, did he ?" said Lucas. "And yet one generally associates him with Guy Fawkes and the bonfire !"

"Pray don't," said Lucy, in a low voice, as Arthur was preparing to join in the attack ; "you see he takes it all in earnest."

"I see no subject for joking in these things, Mr. Lucas," said Mr. Waverton, turning very red ; "and I trust——"

Mr. Hookem turned off the conversation by asking the lieutenant what he thought of Admiral Fitzroy's code of storm signals.

"All very well for yachtsmen and pleasure-parties," replied the lieutenant, as he peeled an orange for the lady next him ; "but Lord ! old fishermen, who have to live by what they get out of the sea, can't afford to attend to storm-signals. They wouldn't get salt to their bread if they did."

Bless you, they know when it's rough without a signal. They can't go without their dinner because there's a sea on. If they can put the boat out, out they'll go, cone or no cone, depend upon that, captain."

"My brother is a regular old Tory, isn't he, Tregellas?" said Mr. Henry Tolpedden. "He'd rather, I believe, see a dozen lives lost in the old way, than save one in the new."

"Well, he is rather Chinese," replied Mr. Tregellas.

"Oh! he can't bear changes," said Mrs. Tolpedden.

"No. If I could, I might perhaps some day want to change you, Polly," said the lieutenant, "so avast hauling there."

"Talking of intrepidity," said Mr. Hookem, "I want, before the ladies leave us and take with them all the sunshine, to relate two stories of Cornish sagacity and courage."

Mr. Hookem was one of those vain men, who, liking flattery themselves, imagine no one can enjoy an evening unless he is well flattered; and who, therefore, in hopes of a *quid pro quo*, make a point of administering periodical doses of flattery to their friends, as punctually as the serving up of the coffee. There was mischief in his eye as he glanced round the table, and every one ceased talking at his good-humoured but pompous fiat.

"But, first," he said, "let me ask about the Cup

Day. Does it stand for Wednesday next, Bradbrain?"

"Certainly, it will be advertised so to-morrow in the *Bodmin Mercury*."

"And who's the best man—you Arthur, or Trellech? What do you say, Mr. Lucas, you practise with them?"

"Well, I don't know. Tolpedden is very steady, but Bradbrain is so awful dodgy, he's up to all sorts of manoeuvres; besides, he goes alone to practise, in all weathers. Trellech is a good average shot, a tremendous fluker, and he knows the ground. It'll be a near go, I think."

"I think, Mr. Lucas, you should translate your remarks for the sake of the ladies," said Mr. Treellas, sarcastically.

"Oh! young ladies of these days understand slang, unfortunately, only too well; don't they, Milly?" said Miss Trevena, spitefully.

Milly's eyes glistened, but she made no reply; for which her inseparable Lilly praised her when they got alone.

"Well, now for my stories, as anecdote-telling seems the order of the day. I always like to see Cornishmen stand out well. My first story relates to the sagacity and presence of mind of a young doctor——"

Bradbrain started, and set down the glass he had just raised to his lips, for he saw Arthur smiling, and guessed what was coming, but no one else saw it.

"Jackson, you can go and get some more of the port—the blue seal ; and we'll ring when we want you. Well, ladies and gentlemen, to return to our muttons. The story is this : Dr. A., as I will name him, was called in some years ago to a young lady at Bodmin, who had an ulcerated sore throat, to which it was necessary to apply caustic. One day, when the family were all out, Dr. A—— came as usual. The caustic was in a quill; to his horror, when he drew it from his patient's throat, he found that it had dropped off the quill, and that the young lady had swallowed it. Imagine his horror, his sorrow, his regret. In a moment he foresaw death, then an inquest, exposure, blame, disgrace, loss of practice, ruin. But, quicker even that, he had gathered up his courage, and discovered a remedy. Like a flash of lightning he remembered that milk was an antidote to that corrosive poison. Instantly, without telling his patient of her danger, he dashed down-stairs, brought up a tumbler of the remedy, and gave it to the young girl to swallow. She did so, without questioning : the milk instantly turned the caustic to a harmless white powder, and acting as a gentle emetic, the danger at once passed away."

"Confounded plucky," said Lucas to Fitzhugh
—"wasn't it ?"

"What noble presence of mind !" said Mrs. Tolpedden. "What was his name ?—is he at Bodmin now ?"

"Admirable!" said Mrs. Tregellas.

"A fine trait of character, wasn't it, Bradbrain?" said Hookem, winking violently as he poised his glass of port wine knowingly, so that it shone a little ruby barrel of wine between his closed eye and the lamp. "You and Mordred don't seem to appreciate my anecdotes of medical presence of mind. Did you ever meet Dr. A——?"

Bradbrain, who had been bending over a plate of filberts, looked up at this. There were spots of red on his cheek-bones—that was the nearest approach to blushing he could ever make.

"Now, Hookem," he said; "this is really disgraceful—this is too bad! I appeal to you, Mr. Tolpedden—has a man a right to repeat a story told him in confidence?"

All eyes were turned in wonder and admiration on the self-betrayed hero, whose confusion seemed so natural and so becoming.

"'Pon my word, when a story involves no secret, and, moreover, reflects so much credit on the hero of it," said Mr. Tolpedden, "I think that there is really no great harm done."

The ladies uttered a simultaneous murmur of approval.

"I thought my fair friends would acquit me of any breach of confidence," said the intrepid and unabashed Mr. Hookem. "I will now tell you how the same Dr. A., with equal sagacity, once cured a hypochondriacal old lady who believed that a small fishbone had lodged in her throat."

"Now, really, you and I will have to quarrel," said Bradbrain, expostulating.

"Nonsense, man! I appeal to anyone present if the stories do not do you the greatest credit? Well, Dr. A., or let me at once say boldly, Mr. Bradbrain, finding no arguments could convince his patient, resolved to cure her by appealing to her imagination. One day coming prepared, he pretended to search her throat with a pliers, and presently held up before her a stiff bristle that he had previously drawn from a tooth-brush. The hypochondriacal old lady, delighted to see the evil not only proved but removed, was cured from that moment. The enormous fee she paid the subtle doctor I leave him to tell you."

"No, 'pon my word, nothing very tremendous," said Bradbrain, laughing; "by no means a bag of gold. Indeed, if I remember right, I had to put her, after all, in the County Court, for she disputed my small charge."

"Yes, that she did, and in the most unchristian way," said Mr. Mordred.

"But your second story, Mr. Hookem," said Fitzhugh.

"Oh! now another fellow's going to be victimised," said Bradbrain gaily, as Hookem glanced round the table, as if selecting a hero.

"The story I am now going to tell was told me only last week by one of the Boscastle fishermen. Four year ago some lads of the neighbourhood here were out on the cliffs looking for sea-birds' eggs, as

they do, you know, in the spring, Arthur."

It was Arthur's turn to colour.

"It's really too bad, Hookem," he said; "it's worse than the rack—the thing isn't worth telling."

"That our friends shall judge. Now, it's no use, Arthur, for I will tell it. No Cornish merit shall be hid at this table, if I can help it; and, you see, there's your aunt, and Miss Tregellas, and Miss Waverton, all begging me to go on. Well, these boys set out one day to St. Anne's Head with ropes and baskets to get gulls' eggs. There were three of them, but only two ventured down—one a handsome, strong lad of sixteen, another a boy of twelve. The story runs not unlike an old one told of some St. Kilda men; but it is, nevertheless, quite true. The two lads fastened the rope to an iron staple in a cleft above, and then went down, while the other one watched above. The eldest was lowest, the younger one higher up. There they were, swaying about, picking samphire and rock flowers, and filling the pouches they carried with great spotted eggs of the sea-fowl, when all at once there came a piercing cry, then another from above that made them look up——"

"Now pray don't," said Arthur, suddenly, his face glowing like fire; "it is really too bad—pray don't!"—The tone of Arthur's voice was sufficient to show he was in earnest.—"It's what every one would have done!"

"Yes, I will! Isn't this a free country? I am not telling a story of anybody's cowardice, am I?"

"Oh! yes, pray go on," cried Miss Tregellas, and several other ladies.

"The eldest boy saw in a moment that the rope had fretted against the sharp edge of a turn in the rock, and hung only by two of its strands. It could not last two minutes with the weight thus upon it. Without any talk or theatrical farewell, the brave fellow instantly resolved what to do; he was the heaviest and the lowest down. There was five-and-twenty feet to fall, but below all was soft, deep, white sand; he might escape, and when he fell the rope would be strong enough for the other. He instantly drew his knife, said 'Good-bye, Tom,' to the astonished boy, whom he told to hold fast, threw away his knife, and dropped. By almost a miracle he was only stunned—he had one ankle sprained, but he received no other harm. Providence protects the brave; and that brave lad was, I am proud to say, my talented young friend, Mr. Arthur Tolpedden."

There was a murmur of admiration.

"Now that's really too bad," said Arthur. "Why, such things happen almost every year in the egg season. There was no great danger on the sand; if it had been down Bude way, now, where the boulders begin, it would have been very different."

"Oh! how very brave and good it was of you!" said Lilly, clapping her little hands, her eyes glowing with enthusiasm.

"Oh! it was, indeed!" chorused the two Miss

Wavertons, radiant with enthusiasm and smiles.

"Do allow me to give you half a glass more, Mrs. Tregellas?" said Mr. Hookem.

"Not a drop, thank you—no, thank you."

"Mrs. Tregellas," said Miss Trevena, in a solemn and telegraphic way, and half rising, "I think—yes—"

At the summons of that stern Pharisee, it was time for the ladies to retire. A rustling spread round the table, the conversation hushed, the gentlemen rose. Mr. Mordred put back his chair with the air of a man when a sermon is over.

Arthur darted noiselessly to the door.

"Now a total eclipse commences, and we poor, forlorn men must begin to smoke some glasses," said Mr. Hookem, in gallant despair, as he moved to allow that inexorable Nemesis, Miss Trevena, to pass.

"Oh! you will do very well without us! What good-for-nothing, false creatures these men really are, Mrs. Tregellas! Perhaps a cigar may help you, Mr. Hookem, to bear our loss with some equanimity!"

"It may console us—it may mitigate—but it will not remove the grief, my dear Miss Trevena."

That amiable evergreen lady gave a shrill, sour, sarcastic laugh, and said,

"Come, dears, now; the wretches will soon make themselves comfortable. Oh! never believe them—faithless creatures!"

Arthur gave one glance at Lilly, as she glided past, like a good spirit; but she did not return it, for she was looking back and laughing with Milly at the duel between Mr. Hookem and Proserpine, as he called his antagonist, Miss Trevena, because etiquette, as he said poetically, tore her from his sight. It seemed to Arthur like awaking from a beautiful dream to a wet day and hard work, closing the door on Lucy Tregellas.

Was he really sorry that his good deeds had been sung, in spite of himself, by Mr. Hookem?

CHAPTER IX.

ROUND GAMES AND A DANCE.

“**N**OW, what are you drinking, Mr. Tolpeden? Mordred, the port stands with you. Mr. Fitzhugh, I’ll trouble you for one of those figs—thank you. Let’s draw more together. Mr. Waverton, is that claret to your liking, or shall Jackson bring some wine with more body?—I should like you to taste my Chambertin—it’s what Digweed always drinks, and he’s the best judge in the Carlton. Trevena, try those filberts—they’re all pink skins—I think they’ve more flavour. How do you like this port?—is it old enough, lieutenant?”

Such was the volley of questions and exhortations that the pompous but hospitable editor

poured forth the moment the gentlemen had resumed their seats, and the disgraceful divorce originated in less civilized times had been effected. Hookem, pleased at having led the conversation so triumphantly, and, indeed, without a rival, good-naturedly rejoiced (for he was not a sensitive man) at the gratification that he felt sure he had afforded to Arthur and Bradbrain.

In the fresh arrangement of seats, Lucas had taken a chair between Arthur and the old lieutenant. The fact was that that fast young gentleman, Mr. Tregellas's pupil, had a passion just now for yachting, and was anxious to ask the veteran a question as to how a ship should be managed in a sudden squall.

The lieutenant, chirpy over his port, was pleased at being consulted as an authority, and broke forth into long technical explanations, more fitted for an examining master at the Trinity House than an amateur yachtsman.

“Brail up the mizen—man the clue garnets—let the main sheet fly, and smartly too, or you'll lose some canvas, youngster. Did you ever read Falconer?”

“Falconer!—who was he?” said Lucas, in a helpless way.

“Why, a poet worth half the lubbers they keep cracking up—the only verse I could ever read, except the Olney Hymns and Dibdin—though, by-the-bye, yes, I did once begin Pope's ‘Homer,’ when we were becalmed for four days off the

Bahamas ; but I couldn't stand all those gods and goddesses, and the Lord knows who. Listen to this—

' While the rent canvas flutter'd in the wind,
Still on her flank the stooping bark inclin'd.
" Bear up the helm a-weather !" Rodmond cries.
Swift as the word, the helm a-weather flies.'

And so on, and so on. I forget the rest just now. But I know it ends splendidly.

' And while the lee clue garnets lower'd away,
Taught aft the sheet they tally and belay.'

. There's some grit now in that—it's true to nature —none of your penny valentine poetry, hearts and darts there, Arthur."

" Well, it's perhaps a little technical for landsmen, uncle, I think—don't you, Lucas ? And why Rodmond ?—why not Johnson or Davis ? Who ever knew a fellow in the ' foksal ' called Rodmond ?"

" Tut ! tut ! that was the way in Falconer's time—poets then used to call things by any name but their own."

" By-the-bye, I see you are talking about poetry," said Hookem, overpowering with his robust voice some feeble questions of the Rev. Mr. Waverton. " I must read you a pet passage or two from the Babyloniad, my favourite poem. I have it in my pocket. Perhaps, taken as a whole, this extraordinary performance is the most remarkable product of the mind of the nineteenth

century, because it has united for once true poetry with a high commercial purpose."

Mr. Hookem had the true actor's power of keeping his countenance ; but the grander his words were, on certain occasions, the more the repressed humbug seemed to ooze out of every pore of his face, like quicksilver through wash-leather. It was evident now in even his eyes that he was not thoroughly in earnest ; he was, though almost unconsciously, satirizing modern poetry by his exaggerated praise of this Mr. Whetstone. The simple-hearted lieutenant and Mr. Waverton, quite unobservant of these subtleties, were listening with as much reverent intentness as if Shakspere had been of the company, and was going to read parts of his own "Hamlet."

"Pass the wine, Waverton—it stops with you," said Hookem, as he drew a little book from his pocket. "My first quotation shall be a eulogy on Mr. Major, a friend and patron of the author's. How daringly he bursts into his subject—

'Though I like not doctors, yet my muse, I will engage her
To write a glowing strain upon the immortal Major.
From the Thames to the Indus, Atlantic to Pacific,
All hail Joseph's Pleuro-Pneumonia Specific.'

Here's a bit equal to Shelley—

'My vessel walks the redd'ning Alps of a sunset ocean,
Laden with restorative drinks and synovitic lotion.'

Then here's a picture—

'The pioneer of the wilderness in leafy bower rests,
To look over for his thriving friends Major's medicine chests;
The standard of Science and Philosophy my hero hath unfurled,
The hot air baths in Westminster are the wonder of the world;
Hail all th' grateful deeds of Major, who doth attain
To the world's approbation, at No. 5, Park Lane.'"

Here the reader stopped, literally overwhelmed by the laughter of his auditors. Every one round the table was writhing in harmless agonies, and in every variety of contortion, except the lieutenant, his brother, and Mr. Mordred, who, amused in a graver way, alone preserved their composure.

"Now the poet, fired by his theme," continued the Sultan Editor, "urges his Pegasus to a brave gallop, and thus concludes—

'My muse, with the great veterinary surgeon,
Doth canter like a filly,
And her way over living hosts doth urge on,
At 5, Park Lane, Piccadilly.'"

"What a consummate fool!" said Lucas.
"I never did hear such stuff," said Mr. Treellas; "did you, Tolpedden?"

"What a sublime fool!" exclaimed Fitzhugh.
"Why, he's only a writer of poetic puffs. Still, there are certain gleams of sense now and then about the Dougal creature."

"What a master of bathos!" said Arthur; "he should write the art of knowing what to avoid in poetry."

"Ah! now you're too severe on your rival poet," said Mr. Hookem, banteringly; "but you must allow me, Arthur, to stick to the fact of his being quite unapproachable. Hear him on Canadian forests. Why, he has accomplished what Dante would have shrunk from, though that sour Florentine did versify all the scholastic theology. Hear Whetstone again. Silence, if you please, for Whetstone—

'Rapt in enchantment, waved on high the muse's miraculous wand,
And straight before me all the woods seemed in their robes
to stand ;
First 'mongst deciduous forests, and in extensive groves,
Scattered in plenteous panoply, see *Pinus Strobus* moves,
Acer saccharinum pass'd like the vision of a dawn
On Eden, nature's primal morn, with garden and with
lawn ;
F. pubescens, more scanty pass'd, but much the same sort
hence is,
This tree's full-oft confounded with *F. Canadensis*.'"

"Oh! pray don't read any more of that poacher on Parnassus," groaned Mr. Tregellas, when he recovered from his second spasm of laughter. "I've laughed till I'm afraid to laugh any more—not to mention a glass I've broken."

"We all admit the unapproachability of Mr. Whetstone, I'm sure; he is certainly more amusing and shrewd than Mr. Tupper, and much manlier than your favourite Littlemore. He's quite safe for the Pantheon," said Arthur.

"By-the-bye, Hookem," said Mr. Tolpedden,

"I wanted to pull you over the coals for so constantly attacking the literary profession in the *Forge*. What's it for?—what does it mean? Is it to please your young amateur writers, who pretend to disregard profit? Were not Shakspere, Scott, Byron, and hosts of other great English writers, all authors by profession? Fie, Hookem, it is unworthy of you! You shouldn't let those novices of yours, either, sneer at Dickens, too, that great, large-hearted humourist, just because he is at times theatrical, and now and then sentimental. These young men should think how he has made England ring with hearty laughter for twenty years, what sick-beds he has cheered, what kind deeds he has stimulated, and with what pleasant and wild fancies he has peopled our imaginations. Then your fuss lately about style, trying to check all idiomatic vigour and originality by erecting a dull, formal standard, that any fool can nail his sentences to."

This was Mr. Tolpedden's way, to store up his wrath and indignation till it overflowed in a perfect tornado. He was quite in earnest, any one could see that by his bold straightforward gaze and kindling eye; but there was no bad temper in his attack.

"Upon my word, Tolpedden, you're giving it me right and left—you're at me fast and furious under my guard, before I can get a fist up. Quarter, *peccavi*, quarter! To the rescue, gallant gentlemen! Well, well, under the rose, I don't

know but what you may be right. The fact is, we find it pays to let our young terriers try their teeth on some tough old reputation ; it makes people angry, raises a dust, and sells the paper. As the coalheaver said, when his wife struck him, ‘Let her go on, it amuses her, and it don’t hurt me.’ What author was ever hurt by talk ? My dear friend, to hear your invectives, one would really think literary reputations were as brittle as those barley-sugar castles you see in confectioners’ windows. Mr. Dickens’s fame is known to millions, wherever, indeed, the English language is spoken. The *Forge*’s just severities reach some eight thousand of the number, and influence only some twenty of those. Pooh !”

“ What do you think, Mr. Hookem, of this proposed Tercentenary of Shakspere ?” said Mr. Waverton, timidly, and sinking down after he had spoken, as if he wished to conceal himself behind his wine-glass.

“ Think !” said Mr. Hookem, dilating himself till he looked like a balloon half inflated—“ think ! why, that it’s like giving an apple to the man who’s got an orchard. Why not look up some great but neglected man whose fame needs trumpeting ? To tell you the truth ”—here Mr. Hookem leant forward, and threw back his coat collars on each side—“ I’m sick of this irrational Shakspere worship ! Why doesn’t some bold commentator enumerate and eulogise his faults ?”

"Faults!" said Arthur in astonishment, not unmixed with horror.

"Hookem!—Hookem!" groaned Mr. Tolpedden.

"Now you're really going too far," said Mr. Tregellas.

"You've no veneration," said Mr. Trevena.

"Faults! of course I mean faults!" stormed Mr. Hookem. "He's chock full of them, as we all know. No one wrote quicker or more recklessly. Look at his wearisome and small puns; his borrowed plots; his entangled sentences; his confused metaphors. No, sir, mark me, no writer is so great that he is not amenable to the court of criticism; and, by Jove! sir, if Shakspere had written for the *Forge*, I'd have slashed his copy pretty considerably, I tell you."

It is probable that Mr. Hookem would not have betrayed these opinions had not wine somewhat relaxed his prudence. As it was, everyone laughed at the notion of Shakspere writing for the *Forge*; and the laughter the editor chose, with characteristic vanity, to take as a compliment.

At this moment Jackson appeared at the door, grave and sudden as an apparition, and said that coffee was ready in the drawing-room. Mr. Tregellas rose at the summons.

"No; one more glass of sherry," said Hookem. "Bradbrain, be kind enough to ring the bell just behind you—thank you."

The bell rang, and Jackson glided in like one of Dr. Faustus's familiars.

"Jackson, a bottle of that best brown sherry. Nonsense about no more, Trevena—always end with a glass of sherry."

When the party broke up, and was passing down the passage leading to the room where the ladies were, some one pulled Arthur by the arm. It was Lucas.

"I say, old fellow," he said, "going to have a smoke before I come in. The ostler here, such a knowing card, says he's got a dozen rats in a barn at the back, and two terriers all ready. They won't miss us. Come along, and have a weed—I've got a new lot."

"No, I really can't: 'pon my word I can't. We shall come in smelling of smoke, and there's going to be a dance directly."

"Oh! hang the hop! I must have my smoke. I do believe, Tolpedden, you're getting spoons on the little man's daughter."

"Nonsense!"

"Well, I must have a weed; besides, I told the fellow I'd come, and I've got money on. Shan't be long—good-bye. What a particular bloke you are!"

It is said to be a feature of the Bohemian mind that it always prefers any work but the present. Such men as Lucas always dislike even amusement, if it presupposes respectability and restraint. A barn with rats in it was to him a Paradise, to-

ward which he was irresistibly drawn, like the ships of Sinbad to the rock of Magnet. Amongst the grooms and ostler-boys he would be regarded as a sporting authority almost infallible, and a “gent with lots of tin.”

A drawing-room, as it presents itself to the eye of the diner-out when he enters it to rejoin the ladies, is always a pleasant scene. It is like a harem peopled by intellectual beings; instead of pink and white puppets. It is a section of the world of Mr. Tennyson’s Princess. The groups are so prettily arranged, that they almost imply some overruling art, for they combine into pictures—the blondes and brunettes blend and contrast like light and dark roses in a bouquet. The attitudes are so gracefully unconscious; the occupations are so playfully trivial; the employments so coquettishly industrious.

In an instant Arthur selected from the groups the spot where Lilly sat on an ottoman; at her feet, and leaning against her knees, was Milly Milverton, whose little dimpled, faintly-coloured face, with its little dark, half-shut eyes, was turned upwards with mischievous fondness. Near the inseparables were the two elder Miss Wavertons, chattering, in a playful and super-girlish way, round good old Mrs. Penrose, who was showing them a new stitch in crochet. Mrs. Tregellas was turning over a book of photographs; while Miss Trevena, ever severe, had selected that strange and unsuitable moment to improve her mind with

Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy," while, remarkable to relate, both her eyes were firmly closed, though her hands still rested upon the inspired work.

"What have you all been laughing at so, Mr. Hookem?" cried several ladies almost in the same breath.

"I told you they were not quite inconsolable," said Miss Trevena, waking up and instantly recovering her steely composure.

"What shouts of laughter, weren't there, Lilly?" cried Milly, leaping up from the footstool.

"We have all been speculating on what it was," said Lucy; "do tell us, Mr. Hookem—was it a story?"

"No, a poem—a most remarkable poem, Miss Tregellas. Ladies, you shall have a passing description of the funeral of our good Prince Albert. The procession is put before us with 'startling truth.'"

Mr. Hookem possessed a great stock of these critical conversationalisms, and he emphasized them with a grandeur and self-belief which was inimitable.

"Here are some lines worthy of Campbell:

'Valets, and liv'ried jägers, and bailiffs, too, advanced;
Here moved the librarian (there's a figure!), and there
the rider—(the rider, observe)—pranc'd,
Solicitor, commissioner (how simple and grand!), each
in official robe,
And hurriedly (that's fine!) behind them came—whose
business is to probe
Apothecaries and surgeons, physicians, men of skill,

Amid the tramp of cavalry, amidst their dreary din,
(dreary din!—good!)
Passed (now observe the word-painting of this group)
the bedizened proxies of the wide Zollverein.'"

The reader's auditors could no longer restrain themselves—one long, hearty, ringing burst of laughter drowned his voice with an inundation of uproarious mirth; even the lieutenant joining, till he had to hold the piano to prevent falling.

Mr. Hookem alone kept his countenance.

"Why this mirth?" he said; "I really don't see, except that the author of the *Babyloniad* is so original and daring that he sometimes startles. A surprise is, we know, one of the sources of wit, and wit makes one laugh. Jackson, some more coffee. And what do you think, Mr. Waverton, of this audacious, spurious episcopal charge some heretic has just brought out?"

Mr. Waverton, who, in his usual stealthy way, had just slidden to a round table and taken up a volume of photographs of London actors, put it down as if the cover had burnt him.

"I think," he said, "it is one of the most infamous breaches of ecclesiastical discipline I have ever known."

"Yes, we burnt our copy," said Miss Honoria Waverton, in her playful way.

"Oh! indeed," said Mr. Hookem, with a meaning side-glance at Trevena; "come, now, I like that—don't you, Trevena?"

"Would it not have been better to have tried to

answer it?" said that gentleman blandly, looking up from a microscope of Mr. Bradbrain's, to which he had just applied his wrong eye.

"It is an insult to the Church to condescend to answer such pitiful, ribald lampoons," said Mr. Waverton, half suspicious of the avowed Low-Churchman.

"I read it, and hardly thought it deserved the term ribald," retorted Mr. Trevena softly, and then moved off to refill Milly's empty cup.

"Yesterday," said Mr. Hookem, as he sat down near Mrs. Tolpedden, and sipped his coffee, "I met a miner's funeral. They had placed the coffin on that big stone they call 'King Arthur's resting-place,' on the road to Dunchine, and they were singing a hymn—'tis a fine Cornish custom."

"Oh! that must have been old Roby's funeral," said Arthur; "I heard he was dead. He was uncle to that curious, sneaking sort of itinerant preacher who goes about as a dowser."

"What, the man with a face that the heralds would call party per pale, purple and argent!"

"Yes, the same; he's a fellow who pretends, you know, to discover metal with the divining rod. He's a hypocritical scamp—we saved him from a ducking at the fair the other day."

"Why, that's the very son of perdition," said Mr. Trevena, who was helping himself to coffee from Jackson's tray, "who led on the mob that invaded Mr. Waverton's parish."

Bradbrain, wishing to lead people away from the

subject of Roby and Sampy, here called on Mr. Hookem for the Cornish story he had promised, Mrs. Tolpedden, as he said, being most anxious to understand the dialect of her adopted county.

The ladies all clapped their hands, and surrounded Mr. Hookem, so that he looked like Falstaff when he was beleaguered by the fairies in Windsor Forest.

He stirred round his coffee calmly, and eyed them with a benign dignity.

"I only exact one condition," he said, "and that is, that my story be followed by a round game—Memory or Scandal; then by a quiet rubber for those who like, and of course a dance, in which everyone must join. I am sure the young ladies won't object to a dance."

"Object!" said Miss Trevena, sourly; "not they."

"I should think not," said Milly, stoutly.

"Jackson, before I begin, half a cup of coffee, if you please—no cream—have you put sugar?—very well, then, here is my story, in the true dialect; and only just see, ladies and gentlemen, how Bradbrain, there, under the mask of putting down Mrs. Tolpedden's cup, is bursting with envy."

"Not I," said Bradbrain; "I be bound I've better things in my wallet."

"Not you—don't you believe him, ladies fair. That's just his brag. The story is this.—Two miners went out one day poaching, but could not find a

single hare. As they returned home, cold and tired, says Jem to Daniel,

“‘ Dan, those who go out to shut are all liards, for there’s no hitting a burd when he’s flying, sim to me.’

“‘ Yes, zackly so,’ says Dan ; ‘ but as we’re out to shut, let’s try the churchyard ’fore go hum.’ And Jem looked through some thistles, and tried to get his knee through.

“‘ Aw ! Dannel ! Dannel !’ he cried, as soon as he had looked, ‘ clucky down, and crib your flent. I’ve seed a bender!—I’ve seed’n, his eyes are zackly like two watches. Be bould—pour some dry powder in the pan—dont’ee shake so, we’ll shut ut, Dannel—the bird’s so large, thee cussn’ot miss him. Aw, Dan, be boulder—rest un ’pon the hedge, my dear, hat off, you know, foach the gun through the dishes, and stank upon my back, my son ; say your graace, mind your aim, shut your eyes, and fire away.’

“The gun was fired, down came the owl, and down came Dan from Jemmy’s back. Up ran Jemmy and Dan, and were horribly frightened when they found they had shot, they did not know what, and that they didn’t know what it was with its huge shining eyes and large outstretched wings.

“‘ Aw ! Jemmy, dear !—aw ! Jemmy, dear ! aw ! let us run—it did seem zackly like a bird ; but we’ve shut a CHERRYBEAM—yes, tes so—he can’t die, I tell ’ee, but he’s got the shots in, and we’ve hurt him.’

"‘Yes, yes, zackly so, sure,’ said Jemmy; ‘I’ve see hes pictur’ on the tombstones at St. Nectan’s, hafe hanjale, hafe cat, but no legs. Aw! we’re gone, Dan, we’re broken buddles; but worn’t he like a bird to shut to?—and he won’t speak, Dan, that’s wust.’

“Says Dan, then, trembling worse than ever,

“Ef we can get from this heer place, we must go to the passun, praps then weshan’t be made spirits of. Aw! ef he wud say that we meant no hurt, and had never seed cherrybeams afore.’

“The parson heard their story, and being fond of fun, and a hater of poachers, he told them that, as penance for their crimes, they must go to the nearest pool, break the ice, and remain in the water till daybreak.

“‘If you obey my orders,’ said he, ‘and never touch a gun again, I’ll see if I can’t get you let off the punishment.’

“Off went their clothes, crack went the ice, and in went poor Dan and Jemmy. After an hour or so, the parson forgave them the penance, and out they came, dripping, shaking, and shivering like dogs who have been having a rough lesson in swimming. As they slunk home, a crowd collected, and raised some money for them, upon which Dan and Jem began to scream,

“‘*Hurrah! passun says we shan’t be made spirits of, arter all.*”

Mr. Hookem’s story was enthusiastically received; everyone laughed at the quaintness and absurdity

of the miners' blunder. Worse, Mr. Tolpedden observed, than that of the cockney woman who, being told that barley was all spun, said she knew it was, for she could see the ends of the threads hanging out of the ears.

"After all," said Mr. Tregellas, "there's no disgrace in a man being ignorant of a matter out of his province—what time has a miner to study birds, or a poor Londoner to go and look at barley fields? Do let us be tolerant."

"Now, just observe Bradbrain, ladies and gentlemen," said Hookem, assuming the air of a mock showman, "and see the working of envy in the melancholy figure before you. He is going to utter some clever detraction."

"You're really too bad, Hookem," said Bradbrain, turning round in laughing anger; "I wasn't going to do anything of the sort; you know very well, that clever as Tregellas of Truro's story is, it can't hold a candle to mine of the swimming grinding-stone."

"Tell us that!—oh! tell us that," said Lilly, clasping her little flexible white hands in the prettiest supplication; "I do so love stories of dear old Cornwall."

"I like the dialect more and more," said Arthur; "it is simple-hearted and original, without being all over thorns, like the Yorkshire and Lancashire."

"Gather the roses while ye may," said Hookem, bustling up, and pushing back an ottoman. "Now,

lords and ladies, ladies and lords, what shall it be—speculation? Give it a name."

"For Heaven's sake, no! We've no counters or anything," said Bradbrain.

"Memory!—let's play at memory!" said Milly, who was proud of that faculty.

"German scandal," said Lilly, "or both, one after the other."

"Agreed," said Mr. Hookem. "Come, sit round."

The long, irregular circle was soon made, and very pretty and Boccaccio-like it was; the different dresses variegating the wreath with pleasant dashes of colour. It was not unamusing to observe the faces of the different performers: some merry and unconscious; some fixed and abstracted; others shy and alarmed. The shy ones were those who knew nothing of the game, and did not know how they should take their part. As for Mr. Tolpedden, he looked rather stern, for he faced Mr. Mordred; and it is not the pleasantest thing to join in a round game with a man who has just instituted a Chancery suit against you.

Milly's eyes were half closed as usual, and innocently mischievous as ever. Mr. Mordred looked as if he was at a revival meeting, and wanted to get back to his ledgers. Mr. Trevena was good-naturedly ready to take his share. As for Arthur, he sat near Lilly, perfectly contented, and eager for any amusement.

"I begin," said Mr. Hookem, knitting his

brows, as he turned to the table, and wrote down a short confused story, which was to be passed round in whispers. Directly he had written it, he repeated it to Mrs. Tregellas, who happened to be next him. With amusing confusion, and evident mis-comprehension, that lady listened, and then, with uplifted hands, whispered it to Mrs. Penrose, who happened to sit next her; lastly, rushing at pencil and paper, she attempted with all her might to collect her entangled and fast fleeting memory. The horror and laughing confusion ran round the circle, till it culminated in Milly, who burst out with—

“ Oh ! dear, Lilly, that can’t be right. Here, somebody, quick, give me a pencil—a pencil directly, or I shan’t have a word left.”

Arthur laughed, as he wrote down his report; and as for the lieutenant, he exclaimed aloud—

“ Pshaw ! stuff and nonsense ! Hookem never wrote that, I know.”

When the circle had done, Mr. Hookem rose and said he would now read the original report, and that after him each scoundrel must read his or her version in rotation; upon which everyone turning to everyone said—

“ I’m sure mine is not right.”

Mr. Hookem then read—

““ Guy Fawkes, going over Westminster Bridge to burn the Houses of Parliament, met William Tell, Ivanhoe, and Adam Bede. To the first he said—‘ I haven’t powder enough ; ’ to the second

—‘How do you like a good report?’ and to the third—‘I shall do the trick to-morrow.’”

“Oh! good gracious!” cried Lilly; “why, I have not three people.”

“I am sure, Miss Tregellas, you said Whittington,” was Arthur’s indignant protest.

“No; I did not say Whittington.”

The second scandalmonger had left out Ivanhoe; the third had forgotten Adam Bede; the fourth had made it London Bridge; the fifth had turned “powder” into “soda;” the sixth had made “report” “shot;” the seventh had lost the third remark altogether; so that by the time the story reached the last scandalmonger, Mr. Waverton, it had dwindled down to this, that—

“Guy Fawkes met William, and said to him, ‘Do you want soda or shot, for I shall win by tricks in the morning.’”

As each version ranged wider and wider from the truth, fresh peals of laughter broke out. The game was highly successful.

“And I like it, because it inculcates a certain moral truth, too,” Mr. Trevena remarked.

Memory was all very well, but it was not near so good a game. Everyone in rotation had to give a name of some celebrated person, and then to repeat that and all the names given by his or her predecessors. The list went on very well till it got to about twenty; then the competitors began to tail off. The list was a strange jumble:

“Cæsar—Adam—Soult—Raphael—Jack Shep-

pard—Boucicault—Nero—Romeo Coates—Psalmanezer—Defoe—Ingelow—Rupert—Lefanu,”—and so on.

Every odd addition was welcomed with groans of vexation and shouts of delight. Whenever Lilly broke down, after a sturdy battle to recollect, Milly instantly gave her the first syllable of the right word, much to Miss Trevena’s indignation.

“It is too bad, really too bad, Miss Waverton,” she kept exclaiming; but still Milly would come to the rescue, after having rattled off some thirty names in the true order.

Arthur beat her, however, at last, much to her playful vexation, by three names, in spite of all Lilly could do without directly telling her.

And now, while the lieutenant, Mr. Hookem, Miss Trevena, and Mrs. Penrose, sat down to whist, the remainder of the party launched into a noisy, scrambling, ridiculous game of speculation. The lieutenant, who was somewhat rusty in his play, had that inexorable Nemesis, Miss Trevena, as his partner, and was put on his mettle.

In vain he tried to remember just what cards were out, and whether the trump left was the twelfth or thirteenth. While he thought of this, he forgot that diamonds had been already trumped, led them, and lost the turning game.

“Two trebles against a single—six and six-pence,” said Mr. Hookem, triumphantly, and in a loud voice, to his partner; “but why, my dear Mrs. Penrose, did you not return my clubs?”

The lieutenant's face slightly elongated ; he thought he had been playing for twopenny points, such as he was accustomed to at the club in Dorsetshire. Hookem's quick eye instantly detected the slight cloud rising on his face, so, while the cards were shuffling, he quietly rose and drew his antagonist apart.

"My dear lieutenant," he said, "I quite forgot to tell you we usually play for halfcrown points ; but don't you throw away your money, we'll have Tolpedden in, he'll like a rubber better than that noisy game out there."

"But hold taut, Hookem, there's a good fellow," said the lieutenant ; "I have only got eighteen pence and a threepenny bit in my locker; hang it all, no, only one and a threepenny, all told."

"Oh ! never mind, don't mention it. I'll take your half when we next meet."

The whist over, Mr. Hookem rang the bell, and ordered Jackson to bring in the *Forge* silver cup, the prize at the forthcoming rifle match.

Jackson bore it in with his usual composure—it would have been just the same to him if it had been the head of John the Baptist. It was a cup worth twenty-five guineas, and bossy with bunches of burnished silver grapes. The handles were twisted vine-stalks, in excellent taste. Every one admired it, especially Lilly.

"Arthur, you must win that," said Mr. Tolpedden, smiling gravely.

"I shall try hard."

"And so will I," said Bradbrain, between his teeth.

"Oh! it is beautiful, indeed!" said Mrs. Tolpedden, to whom Bradbrain was showing it; "isn't it, Nel?"

"It's not bad," said the lieutenant, his praise taking the rough form of his brusque nature.

"Now we must have some music. Mr. Waverton, your Beethoven Sonata, to begin with. I know you have no objection."

Mr. Waverton played that sonata in a very fair and scholarly way, but without the true fire, and moreover rather noisily and mechanically.

"And now Miss Tregellas has promised me," said Mr. Hookem, "a ballad—in the manner of Heine—is it not?"

Arthur felt the blood deepen in colour upon his cheek, as he offered his hand to Lucy, and led her to the piano.

She would not meet his inquiring eyes, but the slightest possible smile dimpling round her mouth, betrayed a consciousness that somebody's eyes were upon her.

"It is really too bad, Mr. Hookem," she said, with pretty anger. "You know you promised me, first of all, to sing me that old German ballad of Gabriel Weissnicht's."

"So I did!—so I did!" said the jovial Sultan; "and so I will; but your song first, my fairest of cantatrices; *place aux dames*, you know!"

When a man is in love, or even nearly in love, it frets him to hear any one even assuming acquaintanceship with the goddess of his dreams; so Arthur looked grave, and turned to discuss Offenbach's pleasant "*Mariage aux Lanternes*" with one of the elder Miss Wavertons.

Lilly never sang better, for she was slightly piqued at the momentary deviation of Arthur's allegiance. No wiry or metallic notes, no shrill screaming, like a crazed canary bird, no feeble twittering, like a badly-taught bullfinch. No, she sang, to use a quaint Italian proverb, as if she had a nightingale hidden in her throat. From her beautiful mouth poured forth flocks of fairy sounds, full, pure melody, such as might have bubbled up in a composer's mind in the rich, calm, satisfying stillness of some balmy summer evening, when nature rests like a Cleopatra in lazy luxury. There was about the simple song an atmosphere of spiritual calm, as of a July moonlight—a rippling progression, as innocent and playful as a brook in May time. There was no sense of stubborn difficulties, painfully overcome, about Lilly's playing, no display of robust Boadicean arms. She played as if it was a joy and pleasure to her; she sang as if she could not help singing, to relieve the happiness of a pure young heart, overflowing with gratitude to God for the life and beauty he had given her.

Such was something the tenor of Arthur's thoughts as he leant over the piano, and quick and

true as the electric telegraph, exactly at the right moment, he turned the pages of Lilly's music, the words of which were his own, and written for her at her own request.

A murmur of applause spread through the room as Lilly finished her song. Not that poor "scrannel" compliment, heartless and hypocritical, which usually passes in drawing-rooms for applause on such occasions, but a real deep murmur of surprise and delight.

How beautiful she looked as she rose from the piano; a slight flush of colour was passing from her cheeks, it had arisen from the honest pleasure she had felt at pleasing; and there was no grain of vanity or baser feeling lurking like a poisonous precipitate at the bottom.

"Do you remember, Tolpedden, that charming line of Catullus?" said Trevena.

"*Ut flos in septis?*" said Mr. Hookem to Arthur, glancing at Lilly as he spoke.

"Now, what is that?" said the playful Miss Waverton. "Oh! those horrid creatures, Mrs. Tregellas, they will always talk Latin when they don't want us poor women to understand!"

"Arthur will tell you," said Mr. Hookem, slyly; "don't blush, Arthur."

"I really must not translate it; but I assure you, Miss Waverton, it is a very harmless compliment, that Mr. Hookem's modesty alone prevents his expressing in English."

After a simple little duet ballad of the ordinary

drawing-room description from the playful Miss Wavertons, Mr. Bradbrain sang a Spanish comic love-song, or, rather, a clever paraphrase of one written for him, as he said, by Mr. H. S. Leigh, a London literary friend of his. His *chanson* was a very happy rendering of a gay Castilian air, and was sung by Mr. Bradbrain in a robust and fervent manner. The words were these—

"Pepita, my paragon, bright star of Arragon,
Listen, dear, listen, 'tis Cristobal sings;
From my home that lies buried a short way from Lerida
(Love and the *diligence* lending me wings),
As swift as a falcon I fly to thy balcony
(Hang this bronchitis! I can't sing a bar);
Greet not with merriment Love's first experiment;
Listen, Pepita, I've brought my *catarrh*.

Manuel, the *matador*, may, like a flat, adore
Young Donna Julia; I pity his choice,
For they say that her governor lets neither lover nor
Anyone else hear the sound of her voice.
Brother Bartolomé, stoutish Apollo, may
Run after Ines (you'll pardon this cough?);
And Isabel's votary—Sanchez, the notary—
Vainly—(That sneeze again? Well, then, I'm off)."

♦

There being then a unanimous call for Mr. Hookem, that gentleman advanced to the piano, and in a Lablache manner, after the customary cough of all amateur singers, chanted in a mellow bass voice, the following version of one of Luther's favourite anecdotes, thrown into verse by the Sultan's own hand. It was a robust, chivalrous

thought, and Hookem's self-assertive, defiant, wealthy manner suited it exactly.

“THE THREE ELECTORS.

“Three princes at the Diet met,
The one was Pfalzgrave of the Rhine,
The second, Lord of Saxony,
The third was of the Nassau line ;
And at the twelfth hour of the night,
When deepest grew the revelry,
Over the glasses and the dice,
They came to words both loud and high.

“First leaped the Pfalzgrave up, and said,
‘ You see my country on the Rhine,
Its castled crags, its miles on miles
Of precious purple-laden vine,
Its sloping meadows, seas of corn,
Its mills, its orchards on each hand,
Its clustered villages and spires—
Say, is not mine the fairest land ? ’

“But then the Lord of Saxony
Rose and rebuked his brother knight,
And cried, ‘ My brother, boast not so !
As sunshine is to the dark night,
So are our Saxon hills to yours ;
For ours with silver caverns shine,
While your mere slopes of stone and clay
Glow only with the peasant's vine.’

“Then Nassau, last, so calm and grave,
Stirred not, but said, ‘ I boast no mine,
My hills know but the herdsman's huts,
And wear no crown of fruited vine ;

But where I dwell, I dwell at peace,
In loneliest cabins dare to sleep ;
My crown, hung on a tree, is safe,
For me no trembling children weep.'

"The nobles sat with bonnets slouched,
A golden medal bound each plume,
The flagons shone beneath the lights
In that old panelled tavern-room ;
And when Nassau had ceased to speak,
The others rose with generous glee,
And clasping hands, cried out aloud,
' His is the best of all the three ! '

And now the lieutenant, being implored by Lilly, commanded by his pretty little wife, and supplicated by Milly and her elder sisters, consented with many apologies to sing his one song, for which Mrs. Tolpedden was to play the accompaniment.

The lieutenant's deportment on the occasion was a study for Mesmer, and Bradbrain fired off many whispered jokes about it in quiet corners of the room. The excellent naval officer put his hands under the tails of his dress-coat, fixed his eyes steadily on the shade of one of the moderator lamps that lit the piano, as if it was a binnacle, and then sang in a not very musical or varied voice, but with much gesticulation of a measured and undemonstrative kind, the fine old sea-song written by Captain Thomson of Hull,

"The topsails shiver in the wind."

"Thank you—thank you, uncle," said Arthur

heartily, for he was pleased at the quiet, natural seaman's feeling of the song, and he was pleased also because he knew the old lieutenant was pleased.

"The young hypocrite!" said Bradbrain under breath to Fitzhugh, who was groaning on a distant sofa at the music stopping all rational conversation.

"The old duffer!" echoed his fellow-conspirator, "not a note in his voice."

"And now my young friend Arthur sings, and no excuse allowed," said, or rather vociferated, Mr. Hookem; "and one of his own songs, too."

The lieutenant drew a small silver chest from his pocket, rewarded himself with an enormous pinch of Bolengaro and Rappee, his favourite mixture, and welcomed it with a royal salute of Cyclopean sneezes.

Arthur had no false modesty; he instantly sat down to the piano, and sang the last "production of his muse," to use a newspaper phrase. It had been suggested by some event in the village, for Arthur did not ransack air and sea for subjects that were to be found so close to his own door.

"Three times for a man, three times
(The sexton shuddering said),
But the passing bell he's tolling
Sounds twice for a woman dead.
Doom! Doom! the bell is tolling
Twice for a child that's dead.
'Tis now the happy April time,
And mossy banks grow blue

With violets brightly peeping
The little leaflets through,
But little Bessie runs no more
To pick them wet with dew.

How warm the sunshine's pouring
Through the belfry overhead,
How warm upon the heaped-up earth
Where I have made her bed.
I care not when they dig for me,
Now my poor child is dead.
'Tis three times, &c."

"*Bravo! BRAVO!*" said Mr. Hookem; "very charming!—very touching! And I declare if Miss Waverton's eyes have not got some of the violet dew upon them. Oh! the power of the poets! Well, there's nothing like a dance to raise the spirits. Come; I'll ring for Jackson and his gang to clear the decks, and send in the band."

As Jackson entered, he glided to Arthur's side, and whispered to him that he was wanted outside for a moment.

Arthur, putting on his white gloves, made his way rapidly past some men carrying violins, flutes, cornets, and other encitements to rhythmical motion, to the bar parlour.

There, to his horror, he found the wrong-headed Lucas, sitting in a dishevelled state, with soiled tie, torn coat, and dishevelled hair, drinking, certainly not his first glass of brandy and water. One eye was black and half closed, the other wandering and vacant.

"Why, what on earth is the matter, Lucas?
What has happened?"

"Shappened? Noshing's happened—row, jolly row shappened—thash what's shappened—great bully—reg'lar mill shappened—here, I shay, another brandy and shoda, d'ye hear—plenty of tin—don't make no misstake—brandy and shoda—much dancing, Tol?"

"What has happened, Jackson?" said Arthur to that plenipotentiary, who at that moment came to the bar to hurry a lingering violinist.

"Dispute about rats, sir—butcher backed his white dog against Mr Lucas's black and tan—lost. Said there was cheating. Mr. Lucas went to turn him out—scrimmage—black eye. Now, mister (to the musician), we're all waiting for you. I'll show you the way to the ball-room—and you bring round a trap to take Mr. Lucas to St. Petrock's—d'ye hear, ostler, and quick!"

"Fresh ash paint," said Lucas, "after little shleep—dresh come back—waltzh with that fine girl of Tregallassish—little man'll be crusty, but d—him. Bye—bye. Now, then, whersh that trap? Don't I tell you another brandy and shoda?"

"Good-bye, Lucas, a good sleep'll do you good. Be as quick as you can, ostler, with that trap," said Arthur, and darted back into the ball-room, where the first quadrille had already begun.

The moment it was over, Arthur was at Lilly's side to explain his apparent neglect, and to engage her for the first waltz. Mr. Hookem had been

her partner, but he had abjured waltzing directly his weight had reached fifteen stone. All trouble fled before Arthur and Lilly as they whirled round the room.

As for the lieutenant and Mrs. Penrose, Mr. Penrose and especially Miss Trevena, who denounced all rhythmical movements as sinful and forbidden in Scripture, they had settled down to a quiet rubber—twopenny points.

Then came one of those skating polkas, next a furious *valse à deux temps*, then a graceful Varsoviana, and lastly a laughing quadrille, in which Mr. Hookem reappeared, and executed all the steps, and bantered, and talked, and rolled about like a Dutch vessel tacking, and kept everybody in unmitigated good-humour.

Whenever Arthur could get Lilly's hand he did, and love grew up that night in one heart at least, swift and fragile as a mushroom; at the supper the inexhaustible and indefatigable Sultan Editor laughed, talked, ate, and made speeches enough for four people.

When the ladies went to put on their wraps and opera cloaks and hoods, Arthur told Mr. Tregellas that Lucas had been obliged to go home, feeling rather unwell.

Mr. Tregellas's sensible face gloomed.

"Unhappy boy!" he said. "I see; another scrape. Oh! he'll certainly go to the bad. I wish he was gone to College!"

"Yes, that's a wild dog," said Mr. Hookem,

with one of his careless Polyphemus laughs. “Trevna, be kind enough to tell the Wavertons their carriage is come.”

“Ha! A tutor’s life is no joke—is no joke, I can tell you,” said Tregellas. “Come, my dear Lucy—come; here’s the carriage; good-bye, Hookem, and thanks for a most delightful evening.”

As Arthur rode home that evening unusually silent, and half asleep, like the rest, in a corner of the brougham, a vision of fair women rose before his eyes. He thought of that early flame of his in Portman Square, Miss Langworthy, and her luminous violet eyes; then of that pretty rustic beauty he used to flirt with at the “Crown,” at Bodmin; then of his cousin, little Barbara Watkins; then of that great dark-eyed girl, a ward of the Rostrevors, whom he had met at the covert-side; and then he fell asleep.

When he awoke the carriage was stopping at the lieutenant’s garden-gate. Dawn was breaking, and leaning over the chrysolite and opal battlement of the eastern heaven, there gazed on him, through the holy light, the pure and loving face of one sentinel angel. The glory of daybreak was upon its brow; the first pale promise of sunrise irradiated its features; a supernatural halo shone like a celestial crown upon its flowing hair; yet, strangely enough, the face was that of Lucy Tregellas.

“Now, then, jump out first, Arthur,” said his father, and that finally woke him.

CHAPTER X.

THE GLASS GOES DOWN CONSIDERABLY.

MR. HENRY TOLPEDDEN was one of those iron men who shape their lives by an austere mechanism. However late at work, however late at a party, Mr. Tolpedden rose at the same hour.

The day after the party old Liddy knocked at his bed-room door as usual. It was exactly eight o'clock. He had then been up half an hour.

"If you please, sir," she said, "Master Arthur's had his breakfast, and has ridden off to the 'Merry Maidens,' to practise for an hour before he goes to Mr. Tregellas's. He was afraid it might be wet, or the wind would rise higher in the afternoon, so he said he'd make sure."

"That's like Arthur—*tenax propositi*," thought the father; "he'll do."

"Am I to light your fire in the study, sir?"

"Yes."

"Thought you would like to lie a little later, sir?"

"No, Liddy, I am nearly dressed. Ring the prayer-bell at the half-hour."

In three quarters of an hour Mr. Tolpedden was seated at breakfast, and ruminating over a passage in Paracelsus.

It was a bright, clear, cold morning in Novem-

ber. The swallows were all gone; the wind, loud and restless, mumbled ominously in the chimney, or whistled like a Banshee through the keyholes. The fire burnt clear and yellow, and the thin smoke went wavering up out of sight, continuous as a fountain.

A great tall bunch of yellow and purple chrysanthemums tossed and shook at the windows, every now and then a rose branch beat and scratched petulantly against the glass. It was one of those days of early winter when an ominous sense of the coming desolation and penury of Nature fills the air. The flowers were passing away, the dead leaves rustled over the ground like the flocks of ghosts on the banks of the Styx, hurrying at the sight of Charon and his black ferry-boat. The skeleton trees looked dark, grim, and metallic against the hard coloured sky. The birds were silent, all but the robin, and there was an innocent sadness about his music.

It is almost a thoughtful man's duty to be sad on such days of augury, when the very sunshine seems saddened, and when the year is growing old, and preparing itself for death.

Mr. Tolpedden did not believe in presentiments. He considered them only the mind's anticipations of possible dangers, forgotten if they are falsified, regarded as almost supernatural if one in a lifetime comes true.

Pshaw! the strange sequences of cards might as well be noted down as supernatural.

And yet, whether from nervous depression after the excitement of the night before, or from want of his usual full meal of sleep, Mr. Tolpedden felt that morning especially open to the skyey influences. The wind seemed to moan round the house like a prophet of evil, addressing itself to his special ear. The mournful flower tapped at the window, as if to warn him of some coming mischief. Then a thought shot across his mind, like lightning across a troubled sky. Suppose Arthur has had some accident with his gun. But that nervous thought of evil he beat down at once as a man would a wasp buzzing round his ear and troubling him, for there was nothing morbid about his mind. The Greeks, we are told, used to be most in dread of misfortune when they were at the height of success. Thoughtful men, who are always on the alert, are, in our own age, in like manner deeply conscious how often Providence heaves up the earth in sudden convulsions under our feet, or pours down upon us, in the midst of tranquil prosperity, an inexplicable fury of long hoarded lava. It is no wonder that men who have themselves suffered in the shipwrecks of early life, shudder to see the glass go down, and the storm-cone go up. A very serious ground-swell of indefinable apprehension moved through Mr. Tolpedden's mind as he sat facing the window, watching the frost on the gravel glisten and disappear in the sunlight as he sipped his tea, and balanced his tea-spoon meditatively on the edge of his cup.

“These tremors,” he was saying to himself, “might well be thought supernatural, and yet they are but the effect of so many grains of acid infused into my blood by yesterday’s champagne at Hookem’s, and can be dispelled by a spoonful of white earth, so base a material are they.”

“Out of temper too!” Here he rang sharply to have another egg boiled a minute longer than the last, so as to fix the white. Yet heart and brain are helpless to control; and all the disturbing cause—one dinner—a truffle, some ice pudding, and perhaps a maccaroni—from such poor earth is man—weak man—framed!

The arrival of a real friend is never so pleasant as at such moments of depression. He comes like the *Deus ex machina* in a Greek play, the only true solvent of the mental difficulty.

At that very moment there were sounds of feet in the hall, and the lieutenant entered, bluff, brusque, honest as ever, and pleasantly invigorated by the cold wind.

“Good morning, Harry,” he said, thrusting out his small but fleshy hand. “Why, where’s the boy Arthur?”

“Arthur’s gone to the butts, Nel; he’s mad after that silver cup of Hookem’s; to use the uncouth slang of the present day, he says he’ll have a regular go in for it, and he’s afraid Bradbrain is going to run him close!”

“Chip of the old block—holds on like a bulldog, when he’s once got the grip! Well, I’ve come

here for two reasons, Harry : first, Polly's got a headache, and is going to have breakfast in bed, so I got mine earlier ; secondly, I've come here to wait for the letter-bag, because I'm anxious, to tell you the truth, for an answer from Elphinstone about our second memorial to the Admiralty. I suppose Fanny's gone for it ?"

"Oh ! yes, half an hour ago ; nothing stops her, she likes the canter."

I do not know anything so delightful as to see two brothers who have arrived at middle life, and are still friends. How firmly rooted is such a friendship, which has become habit—how safe from envy, or any disturbing passion !

The lieutenant venerated his brother as a man possessed of knowledge which, to him, seemed almost supernatural ; while Mr. Henry Tolpedden esteemed the lieutenant as a brave, honest man who had been placed by ill-fortune in a station that had given but small scope for his courage, vigour, and self-denial.

"Polly talks of sending for Bradbrain this afternoon, for Ned's got the mumps."

It was a simple bit of domestic news the lieutenant had uttered, as he turned to a mirror over the fireplace in a heedless way, to look at a place at the bottom of his chin where he had cut himself that morning while shaving ; yet a slight gloom passed over his brother's face as he spoke.

"And why not, Mordred ?" said Henry Tolpedden, from between almost closed lips, as he

viciously bruised a lump of sugar at the bottom of his tea-cup.

“Why not, Mordred?—why, simply because Polly does not like Mordred; Bradbrain is so fond of children, and he understands them better.”

“Oh!” How short and yet disagreeable an answer oh! is sometimes.

“Why, that’s too bad, Harry, disliking a man because his partner has threatened you with a Chancery suit. Why, this is a new tack of yours.”

Mr. Tolpedden was not a man very fond of being bantered, more especially when he was serious. It might be an unamiable trait, and show a want of elasticity in his mind; but so it was, and I am bound to report it.

“My reason, Nelson, was of quite a different kind.” He said it curtly, and poured out as he spoke another cup of tea.

“Well, well, cut the painter—Harry, we can agree to differ about small things. I like Bradbrain; he is full of pluck, and has seen the world, from the main truck to the rudder bolts; there’s no humbug about him, let me tell you, not a bit. But, hallo! here’s Fanny and the pony—now for the letters.”

Rattle, rap, rattle, rap, and Gipsy dashed by the windows to the kitchen door, Fanny urging her to a quick canter, like a bold young Cornish Amazon as she was.

“You seem worried to-day, Harry?”

“Well, Nel, that visit of Mordred’s the other

day, and his threat of a Chancery suit, which I shall certainly fight, does hang about me a little, I own."

A knock at the door—it was Liddy, with the letter-bag.

"The letters, if you please, sir. Good morning, Mr. Nelson."

"Good morning, Liddy; when are you coming to take tea at my place?"

"Oh! when you and your good lady please."

"Very well, then, haul taut there, we please tomorrow; and mind, no shirking your mess."

"Oh! no, sir, it's only too great an honour, and I shall be so glad to see the dear children all together," said Liddy, as she curtsied, in her good old-fashioned way, and closed the door behind her.

The opening of the letter-bag is a great event in a retired country place. The citizen who hears letters fall through the slit in his door almost every hour, cannot conceive the pleasure a letter gives in such a place, where letters can come only once a day. Mr. Tolpedden rose, took a little brass key from off the nail behind the door, and unfastened the padlock of the leather bag. Then he drew out the brass rod, and dived in his hand. There were two letters and a paper—one official-looking letter was for the lieutenant. He burst it open in a rough confiding way, as if it must contain kindness. It contained a cold formal letter from the M. P. to whom he had applied, promising,

if he could, to get Mr. Henry Berkeley to bring the case before the House after his annual motion for the ballot.

"That man will do nothing," said his brother, firmly, when he read the letter; "he is all words and formalities. A man who writes that way, and a man who devotes much time to dress, I never rely on."

"Let him hang and perish, then, that's what I say," said the lieutenant, in a sudden burst of angry voice like a gust of March wind, as he tossed the letter into the fire; it instantly wafted into a flame, and blew up the chimney; "if it doesn't come on, I'll write to the *Times* and expose the whole affair—yes, and I'll make the first lord shake in his shoes."

"That I certainly would," replied his brother, with his grave, half-restrained smile; "though I hope it'll do more than that, and get you and your brother officers the pension you have honestly earned; but still, I don't like to see burning paper go up my chimney."

The lieutenant made a tardy and apologetic dash with the shovel.

"And what's your letter, Harry?" he said, turning round with that delicious inconsequence which was one of the quaintest features of his character.

"Well, mine has a trifle better news. It's from the principal of Baliol, in answer to Tregellas's note, to tell me Arthur can go up and matriculate next week—that's all right."

"Knock the dog-shores away ; launch him, Harry ; he's teak-built, well found, and ready for sea. By-the-bye, Harry, I want to talk to you seriously about one thing—I do, indeed."

"What is it ?" said his brother carelessly, as he helped himself to toast ; "I'm listening. Has Benbow bitten Johnny's finger ?—or Billy refused to kill a rat ? I don't think, Nel, I ever saw you look so serious."

"Now, come, Harry, avast chaffing. I've been long intending to have a serious palaver with you about the state your accounts have got into—I have, indeed, no joking. You don't file your receipts ; your bills run up—'pon my word, Harry, you're exceeding your income. Thomas does what he likes about the oats."

Mr. Henry Tolpedden looked over the edge of his tea-cup with a half ironic smile.

"I know I'm rather careless about money matters ; but you have been a business man, you know. Well, my Lord Chancellor of the Exchequer, if I do exceed my income, won't Arthur be a shining light at the bar, and support himself at the bar within five years' time ?—and if my researches lead me, as I hope, to the discovery of some new metal, what need I care for a few hundreds ?"

[Oh ! sanguine father !]

"Well, suppose they don't lead to it ? The ship may get a return cargo, but then it may go to pieces on the Kentish Knock ; that's why men

insure, isn't it? Your income is out of the way of most probable dangers; but a good store is no sore, as our purser used to say when he was teaching me single and double entry, while we lay at Kingston, Jamaica; and that's my motto, too."

"I tell you what it is, Nelson; you busy men get miserable when you're out of work, and you want something to fill up your holidays—overhaul my bills by all means, if you like."

The consent was certainly given, yet not in the most obliging way. But the lieutenant, soft as was his heart, was tough as to outer skin, and cared not a jot. He had a duty to do, and he did not care what rubs he got. Perhaps he did not notice the somewhat contemptuous manner in which his brother spoke, as he tore off the wrapper of the yesterday's *Times*, and began reading—his face hidden by a square acre of paper. First the "obit.," of course, then the latest foreign news; then a glance at the police courts; then a glance at the money article. The lieutenant was all this time busy at the inner sheet containing the leaders. All at once his brother's eye caught sight of the following cold, business-like paragraph:—

"We regret to announce that this morning the Hertford and Central Bank, in Old Jewry, stopped payment. Acceptances for a total of over 100,000*l.*, lying in the hands of Messrs. Fitzakerly, are said to be utterly worthless. The City rumour is that if some securities obtained from Mr. Petworth at the time of

the fusion of the two banks are not worthless, 40,000*l.*, or 50,000*l.*, may be realised."

Some men, if the axe had thus suddenly hewn down half their fortune, would have burst into an agony of hysterical rage ; weaker men might have fainted ; others would have broken forth into groans of despair. Tolpedden did none of these things ; no sudden burning fever rose into his blood ; no sweat of irresistible anguish broke forth in a cold dew upon his forehead, as upon that of a dying man ; his lips did not grow either white or livid. His was a deep, intense, thoughtful nature —his was no morbid or thin-fibred organization. He merely let the paper fall upon his knees, and gazed silently at vacancy with a terrible calmness, as if the darkness of the future had been suddenly lit up by some cross flash of revelation lightning that had for a moment rendered it visible. Who may tell, in that moment of agony, what phantoms of horror and despair may not have struggled through his dream ? Into one momentary drop of poisonous essence the Tempter sometimes distils the sufferings of years. Yet, the eyes did not deaden, nor their vigour relax ; no, an earthquake could not have shaken that man's courage. As a Federal soldier said of his officer the other day in battle, "a bullet in the heart could not stop him." The lips still did not loosen their shrewd, stern determined grip.

That great trouble, more terrible to him for his son's sake than his own, had only roused his lion-

like vigour and defiance. The old ambition and pugnacity of his youth had returned in full flood ; he was ready once more to put on the old dinted steel, to do battle with the world unto the utterance, and to drive off the ugly spectres, Care and Sorrow, from those he loved.

Ha ! friends, how many Andromedas are daily exposed to such sea-monsters, and how often are they rescued by warriors of whose chivalry and self-denying courage the world shall never know, men of whose heroism no *Gazette* takes record.

Five minutes had passed, and in those five minutes what sharp teeth had gnawed at the great heart of this suffering man ! Suddenly the lieutenant looked up, and caught sight of his brother's face.

“Good God ! Harry,” he cried, as he leaped to his feet, “are you ill ?—your face is all on the work—is it your heart, Hal ?—shall I ring the bell for Liddy ?—can I get you anything ?”

Henry Tolpedden did not instantly reply ; but he rose, folded up the fatal newspaper, and choked back a weight that seemed rising in his throat.

“No, don’t ring, Nel,” he said ; “it’s nothing—it’s a pain I—I sometimes have at my heart,—a sort of—a sort of—cramp, but it’s gone now—it’s painful while it lasts, but the moment it’s gone, I’m easy.”

Then with a great effort he took up the paper again and resumed his reading. It was easy to reassure a man so simple and free from concealment

as the lieutenant, who, indeed, had already risen, and turned to the window to take a professional look at the weather.

"Cramp or no cramp, Harry," he said, without turning round, "I never saw you look like that before."

"Well, I allow *it is* bad while it lasts."

"Hurrah! here's Jack coming in at the gate. I told him to call for me, and I'd take him into school, as I want to go on to Boscastle. Good-bye, Harry."

A moment after in burst Jack, that curly-headed little Tartar, rosy-hot with running, and his comforter flying behind him.

"Oh! papa," he cried, "Benbow has been and bitten Kate, when she was giving him sugar; and do you know, Gipsy ran away from Fanny all round the paddock."

"Good morning, Master Jack."

"Good morning, Uncle Henry," said Jack, unflinchingly.

"Nelson, just come before you go and look at that barometer of mine in my study, and see if you can tell me what is the matter with the index."

Off went the two brothers to the study, leaving Johnny alone in the breakfast-room.

Now unfortunately the desire for knowledge was dangerously active that morning in Master Johnny's mind. It had for some time been his desire to examine in detail a large ostrich's egg,

that stood on the top of a Japanese jar on a cabinet near the window. That enormous, ivory-looking egg he had dreamed about. It was a wonderful egg. It was like the roc's egg in the story of Sinbad. Was it full, and what was it full of?—that's what he, above all things, desired to know.

The opportunity was irresistible; he dragged a chair to the foot of the cabinet, gave one frightened look at the half-open door, and leaped upon the chair. He was a resolute boy, and quite insensible to fear. There were no morbid scruples about him. He stood on tip-toe; he could then just touch the egg—but still it was a little too high up for him. He made a rash, yet frightened jump at his treasure, just as a trout leaps up at a fly—he touched it, to his horror, and down it toppled—he tried to catch it, missed it, and down he and the egg fell, he unfortunately uppermost, crushing the egg into a dozen pieces.

The noise of the fall of the chair, and the crash of the egg, brought in Jack's father and uncle, the one philosophically astonished, the other fiery red with anger. There lay Johnny bruised and crying, the chair, which was one of those old high-backed ones of William and Mary's time, with a bit of its dark carving knocked off, and the egg broken, as if the young ostrich had just stepped out of the shell.

"Well, I'm glad it isn't the jar," said the uncle.

"Glad it isn't the jar!" roared the father. "Oh!

you naughty bad boy!—come, sir, start up directly!—get under weigh this minute!—what did I tell you about never touching anything in your uncle's house? Oh! we'll have a settlement about this, my man! Be off to school, sir, this very minute, and don't let me see your face till night time—come."

His uncle tried to interpose between the Roman father and the son; but the lieutenant, in his anger, spurned all attempts to mitigate the offender's punishment, and discharged a blow at Johnny's cheek, that instantly turned it crimson, and at the same time drove out a gushing flood of tears from either eye. He then pushed Johnny out at the front door, and was presently seen convoying him remorselessly to the garden-gate, where he sternly dismissed him with a valedictory blow.

The Temple of Knowledge at Boscastle loomed to Johnny that morning through a very hazy horizon; the avenue of switchy birch-trees and pliant young bamboos that usually led up to it, in his mind, were dripping visibly with the hot tears of youth. Such moments are as bitter to some children as the hour of leaving Eden was to our first parents; but Johnny was a tough boy, warm-hearted, but high-tempered and stubborn; he only felt that he had been struck, that he considered more than atoned for the accident with the egg, which he could not help, so he took his way to school, tearful, yet angry, rather hoping for a fight with Pod Major, who had stolen his ally and

other marbles, and would not give them up, and whose tyranny had become insupportable. Then he wished he was old enough to go to sea, and he would run away. A mile further he found a comfortable frozen ditch, where he could extemporize a slide, and on that he soon forgot his troubles. Children are like New Zealand warriors, the flesh closes over their wounds as if it was india-rubber.

"I think you do wrong, Nelson, to hit Jack," said Henry Tolpedden, as soon as his brother returned; "those hasty blows irritate and harden high-spirited boys. You struck him, not to warn him, but because you were angry. If you'd remained an hour, you'd have forgotten it."

"I was brought up on harder biscuit than you were, Harry, and we use different charts. There are many ways of getting to the same port—you steer your way, I'll steer mine. Arthur mightn't have wanted it, but that boy is as tough as a bull-terrier, and he's better for a whopping."

"Like a woman, a spaniel, and a walnut-tree, I suppose! Well, gang your own gate; but I know that when I was a boy a blow used to make me, for the time, turn with hatred against whoever gave it me—father, or any one else. Well, I must go to my books. Good-bye, Nel. Try a reproving look now and then."

"Good-bye, Harry. I'm off to town to see about some standard roses Monsieur Chatelet promised me, and I shall just see if that rascal of a boy isn't

playing truant along the road ; he's always up to some mischief, the little villain ! I shall have to buy a whip for him, I know, if he doesn't improve. Reproving look at that boy, indeed ! why, he'd be drawing my face on the nursery wall half an hour after."

Stern of eye, stiff, sturdy, and resolute, in his little Flushing jacket, off sailed the irascible lieutenant, Penang lawyer in hand, cigar at a red heat in his mouth, outwardly furious, his heart really as tender as a hot-house plant, only anxious to overtake the boy, scold him, and then kiss him. The best of us are poor contradictory creatures ; well for us if our failings lean to the right side. In the look his brother sent after the lieutenant all this was expressed, and with it a tenderness and love beyond even that of woman ; for it was the tenderness of a deep mind, and it was tempered by the pulses of a great heart. The judgment had rendered unchangeable an affection that the heart had long since adopted.

"I cannot tell him to-day," he said, "I cannot tell him to-day ; and then Arthur ! Oh ! God of wisdom and of love, do not forsake me in this my hour of need."

CHAPTER XI.

A FEATHER CAN SHOW THE WAY THE WIND BLOWS.

THE mind will not always obey marching orders. The faculties at times (we scarcely know why) straggle and pick up trifles we had rather have left alone. The march is slow, the sunshine fails to cheer the men, even the band's liveliest airs sometimes seem to turn to funeral marches.

There was a draughty roar in the trees. The sunshine that morning came in and went out in a fitful, capricious way, as if it was only half friends with the earth. The sky, now a clear, cold blue, studded with fast-drifting garish white clouds, became in a moment of a murky rain-colour. It was a troubled day, lit by gleams of fallacious hope; let Mr. Ruskin say what he likes about the "sympathetic fallacy," how can we help investing dumb nature with human sympathies, and drawing auguries from her changes, when her blue ether tents over us, and the great productive earth is under our feet, and the sea threatens us, or smiles at us, and the trees shake their impotent arms at us, or wave us pleasant welcomes? Can it be possible that this living and blossoming world has no knowledge of its inmates, and no care for them? Have neither birds nor flowers any love for us, such as we have for them? Does

not the brook gaze at the fisherman, and the violets
see the children that pick them ?

Such were the random thoughts of the great chemist, as he sat amongst his phials, crucibles, and retorts, on which a passing sunbeam glittered in spots and sparkles of light, as he tried to bring back his errant mind to the search for truth in some old alchemical riddle of Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, better known as that strange and unhappy mass of madness, vanity, learning, and deception, Paracelsus. But it was all in vain, neither sylph nor gnome could beguile him that morning to "the chase of the red man," as the attempt to discover a common base to all the metals used once fantastically to be called.

First he took up a huge two-hour glass, and, turning it, watched its sand trickle down in a thin wavering thread, forming a little melting pyramid, that rose and lowered with busy haste—a type of the fluctuating hours whose flight it recorded. Then he caught up a prism, and watched its rainbow colours. Still restless, he rose, and walked round the room, till he came to a large photograph of his son, that hung over the mantel-piece. He looked at that fixedly for some minutes, then heaved a deep sigh from the very depth of his heart, and, going into the hall, put on his hat and left the house.

It was no use struggling any longer with that restless uneasiness, and he now owned himself vanquished by that mercurial sloth that had

visited him like an epidemic. Perhaps, too, some other and deeper cause of anxiety drove him forth that day from his books and from his furnaces.

The path he took was not that to the sea, Dunchine, or the Merry Maiden's Cliff, nor to Boscastle Road, to meet his brother; he passed through the gate of the plantation, and skirting the orchard walked straight to his brother's house. He did not go in at the front door, but, using the license of a kinsman, he passed a side gate that opened from the garden, and entered the house. On reaching the parlour he knocked once, and instantly entered the room, without waiting for an invitation to come in.

There, by the window, sat Mrs. Tolpedden ; close to her, and bending over her, stood Mr. Bradbrain. They both seemed evidently surprised at the somewhat *brusque* entrance of Mr. Tolpedden ; but the young doctor had too much tact to show his surprise, and instantly placed his right hand on Mrs. Tolpedden's pulse, at the same time that he nodded welcome to her brother-in-law.

"Feverish—decidedly feverish, my dear Mrs. Tolpedden, but a little tonic will remove all that ; and as for Ned, make your mind quite easy ; he'll be about in a day or two. And how are you, Mr. Tolpedden ? We kept it up last night—didn't we ? That Mr. Hookem is a man to keep the ball rolling—eh ?"

There was something excited, and ostentatiously cheerful and talkative, about Mr. Bradbrain's man-

ner that by no means escaped the falcon eye of the last visitor.

"My dear brother," said Mrs. Tolpedden, darting from her seat in her vivacious and good-natured way. "I am so glad to see you. We've been so anxious, do you know, about Neddy; but Mr. Bradbrain is so kind and watchful, and he says we need not be uneasy."

"I am sorry to find you suffering from the party, Mrs. Nelson; I don't feel better for it myself. These late hours kill the next day, and, for my own part, I grudge two days for any one party, however pleasant."

"You don't look at all well—does he, Mr. Bradbrain? Your eyes are heavy, and you are so pale."

"Not up to the mark—over-working, I am afraid," said Bradbrain. "I must come some day to put my seal on those furnaces of yours, Mr. Tolpedden; and, as your medical adviser, order you out for periodical horse exercise, for students think—"

"I just strolled in because I was too restless for work. I must apologise for intruding upon a professional visit. It is a selfish thing, coming to inflict one's idleness on other people."

"Oh! don't apologise, Henry—Mr. Tolpedden, I mean. We are always so glad to see you—pray don't use any ceremony with us!"

"For Heaven's sake, don't apologise, my dear sir!" said Mr. Bradbrain. Here he rose and hur-

ried to a large glass bowl, full of iron-grey chrysanthemums, mixed with China roses, which stood on a table at the window. "How charmingly you arrange your flowers! Well, I must bid you adieu. I'm off to Portneweth, to lunch with the young artist fellows there, who are beginning to pack up. I suppose you won't bear a man company? I am going straight there."

"You are very kind, but I *must* go to Boscastle and meet my brother, and I want to have a gossip with M. Chatelet about Arthur's progress. I shall see you to-morrow, of course, at the 'Merry Maidens'?"

"Well, rather," said Bradbrain, somewhat conceitedly, as he beat together his thick white gloves till the powder sprang out of them in a startled cloud. "Yes; I mean to have that cup. I shall have an hour's practice to-day, I think, after luncheon."

"And what does my boy say to that?"

"Say? Why, he says there are two sides to most questions," said Mrs. Tolpedden, laughing. "Oh! Mr. Bradbrain, don't you make too sure. The cup may come Tolpedden way, after all."

"*Nous verrons*, my fair patient."

There was an inflection about the tone in which the young doctor uttered these words that made Mr. Tolpedden contract his lips. Bradbrain saw the expression, and resolved to disarm it. So he turned round nimbly, and looked at a water-colour drawing of Dutch luggers in a breeze off the

Texel, the work of the lieutenant. It was neatly done—the spars were touched in with technical accuracy and neatness; and the shallow, green sea was washed up into vexatiously fretful waves.

“What nature sailors always throw into these things!”

“It’s beautiful, isn’t it?” said the enthusiastic little wife.

Mr. Tolpedden replied drily that ‘sailors usually drew, he thought.

“And when does Arthur go up to matriculate?”

“In about three weeks, I think.”

“By-the-bye, Mr. Tolpedden, I’ve been this morning to look after Lucas. I never saw such a madcap of a fellow in my born days. There he was, quite recovered from the fight he had the night of Hookem’s party, and busy pigeon shooting for a wager with the village innkeeper.”

“I’m only sorry he’s going up when Arthur is; but I daresay they’ll soon drift into different sets?”

“Oh! of course they will. Lucas will be a horsy man—Arthur one of your downright saps.”

“Well, Arthur is no milksop, or bookworm.”

“No, I never meant that for a moment; but he’ll go in for a double-first, laurel crowns, and all that style of thing. I know a certain lady who will miss him here.”

“Oh! Arthur is at an age when he falls in love with everyone he sees; but such hallucinations

with him are luckily as transitory as they are brilliant."

"Oh! don't talk in that horrid, unfeeling way, Brother Henry!" said the little wife, as she daintily re-arranged the flowers the doctor had somewhat disordered; "what do you know about young ladies' hearts?"

"How should I know anything, Mrs. Nelson?"

"Well, it may be so; I don't know," said the doctor. "But I must now really tear myself away. Good-bye, Mrs. Tolpedden; your tonic shall come by the boy this evening." He held her hand in his as he said this, hoping that Mr. Tolpedden would go first, but he did not.

Till they were fairly on the road, Mr. Bradbrain did not speak—at last he said,

"I was wishing to be alone with you, Mr. Tolpedden, for a moment, just to assure you once more of my deep regret at this tiff between old Mordred and you. Mind, I wash my hands of the whole affair—it is entirely his doing—he is a stickler for his rights, and I never interfere in these matters. I should be sorry, indeed, if such a miserable, peddling business interrupted our friendship."

"It will not interrupt it," was the laconic answer. "You and your partner remind me, Bradbrain, of the old Scotch families in '45, when the father used to keep Whig while the son turned Tory, so that whatever happened the family came the right side up."

Bradbrain looked hard at the speaker for an instant, then he broke into a violent laugh.

"Now, that's really too bad—'pon my word that's too bad by half, for in this case my feeling is rather for you, and is certainly entirely friendly. Mordred is a worthy man, and a clever man, but, between ourselves, he would sue his own father, if he owed him a five-pound note—that's his weakness. He was always restless for that bit of barren cliff ; and when he once wants a thing, he never leaves the trail."

At the cross-roads they parted. Between the turf banks and rampart walls of piled stone Mr. Tolpedden paced towards Boscastle, his head weighed down in thought.

"No," he said, at the end of the first mile, as he clenched his fist and struck the air downwards by his side. "No, I don't like him—I'm sure there's mischief in that man ; but I'll watch him—I'll watch him."

CHAPTER XII.

THE SILVER CUP.

IT was a fine day for the rifle-shooting. The great moors shone in the sun with their ruined churchyards of granite blocks, and their golden patches of furze blossom, and seemed to have forgotten all the old battles of Briton and Saxon

that had once taken place on their bounds. The last tinge of Celtic blood, if it lingered at all, lingered only on the tips of the roadside daisies. The clear blue sky was full of huge white-bosomed clouds, that passed northward in great fleets, fitted out for some angelic commerce.

A great white tent, striped with crimson, had been pitched about half a mile from the edge of the cliff, and a thousand yards from the butts, where the iron targets, with the gong centres, now painting, shone black and white, like aces of clubs. The chief target was surrounded by prize-givers, officers, and adjutants, for the second prize had just been won by Captain Boscawen, and the connoisseurs were examining the winning shots and measuring their distances. The bugler had blown just ten minutes ago to cease firing.

Instantly the great red flag blew from the butts the range was covered with country people, ladies, riflemen, miners, and itinerant vendors of nuts, ginger-beer, apples, and glazy, dangerous-looking pies.

Over the judge's tent fluttered the colours of the 10th North Cornish Rifles—the thirteen balls, with the motto, "ONE AND ALL." A shout came from the tent—that was the shout when Lord Rostrevor and Mr. Hookem handed Boscawen the silver claret jug that he had won; and he drank from it to the health of the judges and the regiment, and more especially to his own, the San Creed Company. There was all over the usually lonely moor

a good-humoured buzz of excitement and pleasure. Those who shot were in a fever of expectation, and those whose friends were competing were equally anxious and interested from sympathy.

Beyond the judge's seat were moored several lines of carriages, from which, amid beds of colour, looked forth rows of matronly, pretty, and laughing faces, radiant with delight. To one of these carriages a young rifle officer, whose dark grey uniform, brightened by the silver-bossed chain that looped from his broad black cross-belt, made his way. He was a handsome, reckless-looking fellow, and assumed, very naturally, a barrack air of defiance and audacity.

"Mr. Bradbrain, Mr. Bradbrain," said a voluble, high-toned voice, suddenly, from a large yellow barouche that was moored in one of the most favoured places, "can you tell us when Mr. Hook-em's cup is to be shot for, and can you also tell us where Lord Rostrevor is?—we want to begin our luncheon, and we are waiting for him."

The speaker was a tall, conspicuously-dressed, aristocratic person, with a large Roman nose—a nose, indeed, so Roman and so thin, that the sun shone crimson through its ridges. This lady was environed by three daughters, with similar noses in various stages of growth.

Bradbrain drew up, bowed very low, and made a smart military salute.

"I will let Lord Rostrevor know immediately, your ladyship—he is in the tent, I believe. Cap-

tain Peard,—here he caught hold of a rough-bearded rifleman who was just then passing—“Peard,” he said, “run to the tent, and tell Lord Rostrevor her ladyship is waiting lunch.”

“What! is that creature really a captain, Mr. Bradbrain?” asked Miss Ada Rostrevor.

“Oh! no, he is only a mine captain,” replied Bradbrain, smiling.

In the meantime the Tregellases and Tolpeddens, moored in two contiguous carriages, were intent on refreshment. For company’s sake the lieutenant had joined Mr. and Mrs. Tregellas; and Lucy and Milly Waverton were seated next to Mrs. Tolpedden. Pigeon-pies were yielding up their treasures, their lids being hewn off by burglarious knives. Mr. Tolpedden was pouring out champagne for the ladies, the lieutenant was opening some bottled beer, and the united children were noisy and happy. Suddenly they shouted in chorus,

“Here comes Arthur!—here’s Arthur!” cried the children; and irrestrainable Johnny let himself down out of the carriage to meet him.

Arthur looked very smart and soldier-like in the short grey tunic, with the scarlet cuffs, with his bayonet by his side, and his rifle slung behind him, as he advanced, led by Johnny. He laughed and shook hands all round, perhaps he pressed a certain lady’s hand a little longer than the rest—who can say?

"When does your match begin, Arthur?" said Mrs. Tolpedden.

"In a few minutes, aunt. I've just time for a sandwich and a glass of wine."

"One glass of wine—half a dozen!" shouted the lieutenant.

"No, no, uncle, it would make me unsteady."

"What does the blue flag show?" cried Mrs. Tregellas.

"A centre."

"And the red?"

"A bull's eye."

"When the gong sounds, is that a bull's eye, then?" said Lucy, her eyes sparkling with interest.

"No, that's a centre, Miss Tregellas." How full of chivalrous deference his manner to her was.

"Now they're going through a few manœuvres before they begin."

Tantara, tantara, trala, trala, the bugle rang out at that moment the signal to fall in.

"Fall in, Tolpedden," cried Bradbrain, rather pompously, as he passed the place where Arthur stood, having just before stopped to explain to Mrs. Tolpedden the way in which a rifle was sighted.

It is difficult to say why a tone of voice should sometimes make simple words fall on us like so many drops of vitriol. How is it that a passing mental feeling can give them such corrosive power? Arthur was nettled at the vanity of a man who could not resist showing off his momentary power even at the expense of a friend.

"Captain Boscowen has allowed us men who are going to shoot to fall out, because our hands would get unsteady," said Arthur, carelessly, as he tightened his belt and swung his bayonet round into position.

A mounted adjutant dashed up at that moment, and saluting Bradbrain, requested his attendance in the tent, as the colonel would be obliged to him to number the men, and try the companies, while he came to lunch.

Bradbrain scowled, bowed to the ladies, and went off, muttering to himself that Arthur was "a crafty beggar, and had got the pull of him, but it should be the last time, by Jove!"

By this time the moor was more animated than ever. There was Mr. Mordred riding about on a black horse, coldly and formally bowing to friends and patients, and peering at the whole business in a melancholy, reproachful way, as if he was a foreign spy at a Government review. Deferential to the poor, servile to the rich, this herald of death was the one blot in the day's merriment and pleasant excitement.

There, too, were the three young artists from Portneweth, in remarkable wide-awakes and basque hats, enjoying everything. Dodgeson, that gaunt humourist, was making a sketch for the *Illustrated London News*; Hewer was retiring to lonely spots to watch the distant effects of breakers at Cape Gurnard; and Fisher was making mental notes of attitudes and odd Cornish faces.

M. Chatelet was there also, gravely enjoying his cigar and a day's respite from De Porquet and other grammatical tormentors, and chatting with the Wavertons. As for Mr. Tregellas's three pupils, they had left their tutor after the manner of private pupils, and were enjoying a quiet game of "Aunt Sally" in a distant field. Mr. Trevena, who was the chaplain of the regiment, had long ago discovered the whereabouts of Milly, and was explaining to that smiling young lady, officially, the intended manœuvres, in spite of all his sister's nudgings to come and bow to Lady Rostrevor.

There, too, close to a tilt waggon, moored on the edge of the moor, behind the judges' tent, surrounded by a crowd of miners, who were tapping a large brown stone jar of ale, was Sampy, with his dismal heraldic face now rendered still more ghastly by a suit of greasy black, and an old bulgy hat, swathed in walls of rusty crape. He stood close to a blazing wood fire, at which some riflemen were toasting cheese on their pocket-knives, till it dripped like yellow lava into the flames.

Tra la tow to wo, went the bugle, up jumped the riflemen.

"Zackly so! Why, comraades, tes the bugle, esn't it? Come, Titus, one and all, come, all you pelchard eaters?" were the cries that ran round, as the great hearty burly fellows crammed the burning cheese into their mouths, scrambled up their rifles, and hurried off at the double, laughing, shouting, and bantering each other.

"Why, this is as bad as a seven hour coor at bal (mine), esn't it?" cried one gadite (miner) to another, as they fell into the ranks, and grounded their arms; Lieutenant Bradbrain, stern and murky, rode up, and the cry of "Fall in!" ran along the moor, where the buglemen were still blowing.

During this time Lord Rostrevor, a reddish-faced man, with grey dragoon whiskers, and mounted on a great bony chestnut hunter, had cantered up to the family barouche (arms, three pilchards, hauriant argent, on a field or), motto, old Cornish, FAITHEAC ABOO, "I come in time!" His lordship was rather heated with sherry and a pressure of business—not usual with him—rather cross, moreover, at being so long kept from luncheon, and rather irritated at having probably to leave it again so soon. The colonel was by no means talkative, he snubbed his wife, and pooh-poohed his daughter; he ate, however, half a fowl, and drank nearly a bottle of champagne—ate and drank in a snorting, violent sort of way, secretly cursing all volunteers, and especially the 10th North Cornish, as an old Peninsular man was bound to do.

In the meantime, Arthur lingered near his magnet. The magnet certainly looked very attractive and charming in her little round hat tipped with a grebe wing, and a blue cloth paletôt over a light grey dress. There was so much sunshine about

her, that she literally seemed to diffuse a glow of happiness all round her.

Mr. Hookem was talking to the Tolpeddens in the next carriage ; jovial and noisy as ever, he looked well in his fawn-coloured paletot and light cinnamon-coloured trousers. His broad, clever, audacious face, with a touch of the charlatan in it, literally beamed out under the broad brim of his white hat. He was unusually grand, for he had been discussing the Game Law question with Lord Rostrevor, who had four gamekeepers disabled in six months.

The review had now begun. A glint of sun flashed from Bradbrain's drawn sword. Presently there was a "click, click, rattle, click," that was fixing bayonets, and the double row of sharp steel glittered like a diamond wall.

The ladies all rose in the carriages ; there was a flutter of yellow and violet, and blue and pink ribbons, and a putting up of little parasols, no larger than camelias. Was it not natural that Arthur should give his hand to Lucy, whose little foot had got entangled with the wrappers at the bottom of the carriage. The children shouted, and Kate slapped Neddy for treading on her frock.

"Why, they are forming fours," said Arthur to Lucy. "Now they are advancing in line. How even they are!"

"The Cornish men are big-chested fellows," said his father, who had been unusually silent, but who had thawed a little since luncheon. "They

say a regiment of them occupies more ground than any other militia regiment in England. But the Cumberland regiments claim the same thing, and I suppose it's true of neither of them."

"Now they're getting under weigh," said the lieutenant. "Look, Polly, look, Jack, and Teddy. Kate, put down that parasol. Now they're throwing out skirmishing parties."

"What are they doing now?" said Lucy. "All running up to Mr. Bradbrain, who stands with his sword in the air; they're clustering round him! What are they doing? Why, now some of them are kneeling, and holding out their bayonets—there's quite a hedge of them! Oh! mamma, do look, isn't it a pretty sight?"

Mamma took the transformations of the 10th Cornish with great equanimity.

Arthur was delighted at Lucy's enthusiasm, for it was his own regiment she was admiring.

"That's called a rallying square. Suppose the enemy's cavalry broke us, then we should form in those little porcupines all over the battle-field, and when the storms of grape and whirlwind of musketry lulled a little, our bugles would ring out, and we should shout, and mass together again, and, under flying colours, charge down once more upon the beggars."

Arthur had got quite carried away by the enthusiasm of his impromptu profession. His eyes kindled, his chest really seemed to dilate. He looked like a young Indian brave, who sees from

his ambush a deer coming within reach of his arrows.

"Why, I didn't know Arthur was such a fire-eater!" said the lieutenant. "Now they're tack-ing again. What are they up to now?"

"Now they are forming fours again, they are going to get in line and make a left wheel."

"I've been having a talk with Rostrevor and the Dean," said Mr. Hookem to Mr. Tolpedden, "about those infamous letters signed 'JOE MANTON'; hang the *Trimmer*. Why, sir, as I have often said, the game-laws are invaluable to us; for the resist-ing the temptation to poach is the finest moral training for our labourers."

"That line of argument never struck me be-fore," said Tolpedden, drily, and then relapsed into unsocial silence.

Hookem, in despair, turned to Arthur, and first complimenting Mrs. and Miss Tregellas on their encouragement of such patriotic demonstrations, said to Arthur,

"Did you ever see finer fellows than these miners? They remind me of those fine, vigorous lines of our friend Hawker's, of Morwenstowe,

'See where they move—a battle-shouldering kind,
Massive in mould, but graceful, thorough men.
Thence came their mastery in the field of war.
Ha! one might drive battalions, one alone!'

Is Arthur going to win our *Forge* Cup, you battle-shoulderer, Tregellas?"

"I am sure I hope he will."

And Lucy, too, looked as if she wished it, for her eyes were eloquent of hope.

"I am sure, if kind words could make me win it, *I* should win it," said Arthur warmly, with a glance at Lucy that made her suddenly anxious to get her opera-glass into exact focus; while Clara and Bertha pulled at her different ways, to draw her attention to different objects, and Hubert shouted out—

"Oh! Loo!—Loo! here's the band going to strike up!"

"Be quiet, children," said Mr. Tregellas, who was delighted.

And so was everyone; just as Lord Rostrevor appeared in front of the rank, the band struck up "Pretty Polly Perkins," and the men presented arms.

"How do you know where to aim at different distances?" said Milly in her bird-like way, as Arthur held out his rifle to show the children the little slide for sighting.

Arthur explained that the marksman looked through the black notch on to the knife-blade edge of the foresight, and so by raising or lowering it the eye obtained a fine or a coarse aim.

"Isn't it very difficult at those great distances, Mr. Tolpedden?" said Lucy.

"Oh! it's awful! The target grows smaller and smaller, till it at last looks no larger than a single window pane. It seems at first impossible

to hit it. To see over the sight you have to hold your head stiffly up, and in the most uncomfortable position. But look!—look! Miss Tregellas—now they're going to march past."

The riflemen looked in perspective no larger than boys, and Lord Rostrevor himself no bigger than a painted tin soldier.

"See our company, the second," cried Arthur; "firm as a wall, rifles all straight as a die!"

"Are they going to fire, Cousin Arthur?" inquired Jack; upon which Clara and Bertha, with delighted horror, hid their faces in their hands, and scuttled at the bottom of the carriage.

Just at that moment up strided Mr. Trevena, distinguishable by his long chin, large, good-natured nose, and smiling, enthusiastic grey eyes. He was, as usual, in his Oxford mixture Inverness and careless black wide-awake, and he shook hands, and chatted with everyone; but perhaps most of all with Milly, whose pale face lit up, and whose little eyes twinkled suspiciously at his approach.

"I've just seen that old woman you used to send the soup to at San Creed," he said to Mrs. Tregellas; "and she says her rheumatism is better, but that Martha is worse than ever. Hallo! children! how are you, boys and girls? Give me a kiss, Kate! I'm going to pinch you, Hubert, for that new jacket. Come along, old fellow!"

All this time the lieutenant was intently busy with an enormous howitzer of a telescope, with the

coloured flags of every nation on the outside, which he adjusted on the door of the carriage with a scientific and experienced air, much to the awe of the children.

Presently up strolled arm-in-arm the three young artists, Dodgeson, Hewer, and Fisher, who took off their hats to the ladies, and shook hands all round.

"Now, Mr. Dodgeson," said Mrs. Tregellas, with a judicial air, "when am I and my eldest daughter to come and see your sketches of the Logan, the Mount, and Brown Willy, that you promised to show us?"

"You are always welcome," replied the gallant Dodgeson, smiling grimly, and stroking his pointed beard. "Will you come to-morrow? We start to-day week."

"I've also promised to go ever so long," said Arthur. "Shall I come and drive you and Miss Tregellas? I shall be proud and delighted."

"To-morrow is the Penny Reading, my dear," said Mr. Tregellas; "and we dine early."

"To-morrow we can't come. Thursday we could come. Would Thursday do for you, Arthur?"

"Perfectly."

"Thursday, then."

"You'll find us living like Robinson Crusoes," said Hewer; "and our bark is generally on the sea from about 3 p.m. We are now studying marine sunsets."

"There goes the bugle," cried Arthur. "I must be off. Well, it stands for Thursday, you fellows. Good-bye, all."

"Yes. God bless you!—use the straight powder!" cried Fisher, curling his red moustachios with his forefinger.

Off dashed Arthur at the double, swinging his rifle closer at his back. For a moment Lucy felt nettled that he did not give her one parting look; but love and ambition cannot occupy the heart at the same time.

The men were just falling out. At that carefully selected moment Mr. Mordred rode gloomily homeward, purposely passing Lord Rostrevor, who, as every one saw, drew up and bowed to him in a grand but familiar way, as he rode back to his carriage.

That was a golden moment with the county banker. No one but himself knew that the old nobleman had mortgaged half his estates, and that his account at the Boscastle Bank was considerably overdrawn. Proud and blustering as he was, he was obliged to be civil to that taciturn corpse of a man.

As a doctor, Mordred had the family secrets of half the people on the moor in his possession; as a banker, he had the pecuniary secrets of half the others. To hold this secret power was his pleasure. Let the fools, he said to himself, flaunt their equipages, their vain, fantastic, worldly dress, their pampered horses, and their insolent footmen,

I can bring them to me at one pull of the golden check-string.

Before Arthur had run two hundred yards he met Boscawen hurrying to tell him that Captain Vivian was waiting. Boscawen was a very light curly-haired young county dandy, with uniform glossily new boots absurdly transparent, and one eye glazed over with a staring eye-glass.

"Come along, old man," he said to Arthur, in a voice rather muddled with pale sherry. "How those Trefussis girls are carrying on with that swell with the fiery whiskers! I want you to lick Bradbrain, he is so bumptious! He's been screwing himself up with brandy. It's all between you and him. Trelyn does very well by himself, but he funks shooting in public. Ha! ha! keep your pecker up—take some sherry."

Boscawen's laugh was loud, but uncalled for.

"Mind, I've got a fiver on you."

"I won't touch a drop—I like to keep my head cool."

"As you like. I shoot better for sherry. Try some pop?"

"I'll take nothing."

There were only four competitors—Arthur, Bradbrain, Trelyn (an old subtle farmer, who made a living of prize-shooting), and Polworth, a fat draper from Port Isaac. Their names were called by Captain Vivian, as they drew up in line, and grounded their rifles. There were to be twenty shots each, at four ranges, 200, 500, 700, and

1,000 yards, to be shot in Government positions, the rifles to be loaded for the competitors or not, as they elected.

Bradbrain had his saucy boy as a loader, and so had the fat, good-natured draper; Trelyn indulged in measuring funnels and wind-guages, and all such paraphernalia. Bradbrain was first in the rank; he was silent, rather cross, determined, and audacious. He would not speak a word to anyone, but tightened his belt, and carefully adjusted his sighting. His first shot was a ricochet; he had fired too low, and the bullet struck the dust at the foot of the target.

"A little too short," said Trelyn, critically.

"Every fool could see that," was the reply of the sullen marksman. "Here, boy, load, and mind and don't bruise the bullets, or I'll clout your head for you."

They were standing to fire. It was all easy work at present.

Tolpedden fired—up went the dark blue flag. It was a high centre right. He ought to have aimed a little more to the left, for the wind blew at intervals sharply from the west towards the sea, that could be heard moaning in its restless agony below.

Whiz, ping, bang went Trelyn, just on the left corner of the target.

Bang, miss, went Polworth, who then shouldered his rifle and wheeled round in a splendid military manner, and with perfect good-humour.

At the end of five shots, when the adjutant read out the score, it stood—

Bradbrain	0, 3, 2, 3, 2.
Tolpedden	2, 0, 0, 2, 1.
Trelyn	0, 0, 1, 1, 1.
Polworth	0, 0, 2, 0, 0.

“Five hundred is my best distance,” said Polworth, delighted with everything, because it advertised his business.

“Licked you that lot,” said Bradbrain, spitefully, to Arthur, as he himself drove down a conical bullet, and new-capped his piece.

“Can’t quite get the range,” said Trelyn, readjusting the wind-gauge.

“I shall do better from the knee,” thought Arthur, as he silently braced up his courage, though a little vexed.

“I am sorry to say Arthur’s three behind,” said Mr. Trevena, as he helped out the ladies, to whom we left him speaking; “but he is sure to pull up, he is so steady. Bradbrain seems rather unequal and excited, the other two are nowhere. The sun’s out again—that’s a good omen.”

“Was that the dean you bowed to?” said Mrs. Tregellas, as they all walked towards the marks-men. “He didn’t seem very cordial, did he?”

“No,” said Mr. Trevena, rather wincing; “he doesn’t like my bishop’s charge, I suppose—he was all smiles, I saw, to the Wavertons.”

Arthur loaded for the five hundred yards with

great care ; he poured in the coarse-grained powder, the bullet just firmly pressed the powder, and no more ; off went the burst cap, and on went a little burnished hat of copper ; tap went the sliding bar, till it rested slantly on the very top of the sight-supports, whatever their technical name may be. Bradbrain was even more careful.

The two combatants were all the while keenly criticised by a group of riflemen, among whom Sampy held forth.

“ It’s all between them two, simly,” said a burly corporal, who leant on his rifle muzzle with an air of authority.

“ Young Tolpedden ’ll beat him,” said a farmer, “ at shutting or at riding—he don’t cumstumble his comraad yet—Tolpedden, he knaws tin, he do.”

“ He’s a brave young slip of grace,” said the corporal ; “ look how he holds his rifle, as if his arms were tin-stampers.”

“ That’s the chosen instrument—that’s hem as saved me from wild beasts at Ephesus,” said Sampy, “ for which Hallelooliah and the Lord be praised, for I ain’t forgot it.”

The grateful and enthusiastic itinerant preacher, as he spoke, advanced to shake hands with Arthur, who had just then fired, and had fallen to the rear to load. Arthur had only got a white, and was in no mood for talking to people he did not like.

“ Oh ! all right, all right, my good man, you’re quite welcome,” he said, somewhat ungraciously ;

"here, boy, get back—don't crowd so, you people."

Sampy shrunk back somewhat crest-fallen. His gratitude to a popular person had been a little ostentatious; but his mortification (for he was a vain man) was real enough.

"Now, pray stand back—pray, do stand back," said Mr. Hookem, waving his stick hopelessly; "give your comrades plenty of room to load, for Heaven's sake—we want perfect fair play."

Whiz! went the bullets, with a *crescendo* pop, almost like pellets from a gigantic pop-gun, and borne in jets of flame. Then came the ting-tang of the stricken target, from which the white dust could be seen flying, as the red, white, or blue flags started up over the wall that concealed the marker.

"Banker!" cried a man in the crowd, as Polworth fired and there came in answer only a thin sound, as of a bullet that had sunk into a turf.

"No, that's Mr. Mordred," laughed the undaunted draper, kicking the white cartridge papers, that lay round where the shooting had been, as thick as chips in a carpenter's shop.

This time Arthur was only two behind; and Polworth, laughing ruefully, retreated from the contest, saying,

"That'll do for me," as he plunged down on the dry tawny grass, complacently, and pulled out a sandwich tin and a flask of sherry; finally drawing out a huge cigar from a brown leather

case, he licked it all over, just as a boa-constrictor moistens the victim he is about to swallow.

As the red danger flag was hoisting, and while the mounted adjutant of Lord Rostrevor was cantering up to the butts to ascertain the whereabouts of the last shot of Arthur's, which had been incorrectly marked, up came Lucas, Fitzhugh, and Maclean, with vertebrated wooden dolls in their hats, that they had won at the "knock-me-downs."

"Well, how are you getting on, old fellow?" said Lucas; "we've been having such a spree."

"Well, I'm a little behind; but I hope to pull on if the wind doesn't get up."

"But it does get up, my hearty," said Bradbrain, tossing into the air a piece of cartridge paper, that whirled away swiftly to the left; "and I'm best in high wind. I'll wipe your eye now, Tolpedden, if that last one of yours is only a white, I'm now six a head, and you'll find it hard to pull that off in your last ten shots at the long ranges, too, and the wind rising."

"Hard, but not impossible," thought Arthur, who felt steady in nerve, and warming to his work, and whose blood was rather up at Bradbrain's irritating superciliousness; "at least here goes one to it."

"A centre—it was a centre!" shouted the adjutant, as he came cantering back. Lucas cheered, and up went the blue flag at the butts.

"D——" muttered Bradbrain, and scowled at Lucas rather malignantly.

"I've a good mind to punch that man's head," whispered Lucas, who wore a green patch on one eye, to Fitzhugh.

"Tolpedden is shooting very steady, but he's overweighted," said Boscawen to them, "I shall lose my fiver as sure as eggs are eggs. Come and have some sherry."

"I don't care if I do," said Lucas.

"I'm all there," said Fitzhugh.

Trelyn, having had four misses running, now withdrew from the arena.

"If I had only brought a Brinley Richards' wind-guage," he said, "I should have won the cup as clean as a whistle, and with this reflection he went off to some pool-shooting at another target.

By the time Arthur had wiped the black damp off his lock-plate, and rubbed his gun down, the officer gave the signal for commencing firing at the 800 yards.

Bradbrain laughed scornfully as the target in perspective began to look no larger than a playing card, and the wind got higher. It was dispiriting to look at the target over the notch of the back sight. The wind blew from left to right, so that it was now necessary to fire at the extreme left edge of the target to get the bullet in place at all. It was at such times that Bradbrain was usually most successful.

"Put the steam on now, Tol," cried Lucas, who was squatting on the ground, his hands on his knees, and staring at the almost impossible target.

Arthur gave a smile of quiet determination.

"He's as firm as the Grindstone" (a rock off the coast), said Sampy to a cadaverous brother preacher.

"I'll lay even money now!" cried Polworth, radiant as Scott's Dandie Dinmont; "young squire's so steady."

Down went Bradbrain on his knee; a long, sure aim; no muscle moved; he held his breath, and the trigger fell swiftly but imperceptibly.

"There's a centre!" he cried, as he sprang on his feet, with eyes full of feverish triumph, and shading his eyes with his hand, glared at the white and black.

But no gong clanged. No—"The schemes o' men and mice gang aft ajee." Up waved the white flag, half mockingly. It was 1, and the adjutant jotted it down without a word of encouragement.

"Not so good," said Boscowen, biting off the end of a new cigar, as a chaffinch does a bud.

"Let somebody mend it, then," replied Bradbrain.

Arthur said nothing, but, watching the wind, dropped on his knee, and fired carefully at the extreme lower white edge of the target.

"It was a centre! Hurrah!" shouted Polworth and Co., as up went the blue flag.

At the end of the five shots the score stood—

Bradbrain 1, 2, 3, 2, 0.

Tolpedden 3, 3, 2, 1, 2.

Tolpedden and Bradbrain were ties at last. Tolpedden's friends cheered.

"Now for the thousand yards," said the doctor, as he drew aside, grinding his large white teeth. "Give me some brandy—somebody! I'll lick the boy yet. He's getting tired; his hand shook infernally at the last two shots. I'll have that cup, or I'll know the reason why, I tell ye."

The target now looked so small, that Arthur turned round to Fitzhugh, who stood near to load for him, and compared it to having to shoot at the handle of a tea-pot at half a mile off. The wind had risen cold, gusty, and uncertain, and no shots were allowed.

"The Enfield rifle is not a bit of good after 700 yards," growled Trelyn. "They should have Armstrongs; but it's as fair for one as the other. Bradbrain's funkings."

Three times Bradbrain took aim, and three times put down his rifle to dodge the wind. At last the jet of fire came, and the rifle spoke. The sun had gone in, and the butts looked very grey and bleak now, when no flag came blossoming up over the turf wall.

"Duck's egg!" shouted Polworth, heedless of all remonstrance; for Bradbrain did not deal at his shop.

"Wrong parabola," said Maclean the Colensoist.

"Any fool could tell that, Maclean," said Bradbrain. "Perhaps you'll trouble your friend, who

is going to fire, now with the right one, for his hand shakes damnably."

Arthur heard his own heart thumping, as he held his breath to pull the trigger. He aimed this time five feet from the edge of the target. It was too much ; the bullet missed, and struck the turf with the sound as if a log of wood had been cloven.

"A miss, by George ! and after that care ! That's right," shouted the doctor, with a neighing laugh that was as vulgar as it was irritating.

The rivals were now thickly surrounded by anxious spectators, and all other sports on the moor, whether hurdle-leaping, or knock-me-downs, or Aunt Sallies, were for the time suspended ; at every shot there went up a hoarse murmur of hope or fear.

"Bradbrain is so cheeky, I hope he'll be licked," said Lucas.

"I am afraid Tolpedden's a little tired. There's a second miss ; that'll never do," said Fitzhugh.

The next two shots were equal, so they were still ties. The excitement now was tremendous.

"They've three more shots each," said Polworth. "Now, then, two to one on young Squire Tolpedden !"

"Two to one on Tolpedden !" cried Boscawen.

"Done, in tens !" cried another officer, who had strolled up from the pool-shooting with a capful of shillings he had won.

"It'll be ties, simly," said a miner—a rifleman.

"It shan't be ties long," said Bradbrain, who

overheard him, as he loaded in a fury of excitement, his eyes bloodshot, and his hands black with powder, "I warn you, not if I know it! No; I am not going to have the thing dragging about for a day or two, not I. I mean to carry the cup home to-night, and make some punch in it for my old woman. Look here, I'll shoot any three of you for a twenty, to-morrow—it's all luck in this young fellow."

"I like his pluck, comrades; he's the right grit," said Polworth, winking, as he turned his back from him, and stuffed his tongue in an insufferable way into his left cheek.

Bradbrain fired and got a white.

Tolpedden fired and got a white.

"Now they've got the range," said Lucas. "Keep up your pecker, boys, and fire straight. Still ties."

"And now they've got the level," said Fitzhugh.

Arthur, had he been a pagan, would have invoked his special deity, Mercury, god of Cunning and Art, or Minerva, the patroness of that objectionable lying rascal Ulysses; as it was, he evoked before him only a pure, bright face, crowned with golden brown hair, but from that vision a benediction of eternal sunshine seemed to spread with augury of victory. Much turned on the next shot, for it was too late now to retrieve even one bad or unlucky bullet.

Bradbrain fired with skill and care, but a little

in a hurry. How he swore to himself when the white flag went up, and the adjutant scored him only *one*. He was rather pale when he rose.

"There, top that, you duffer!" he said savagely, as he fell back.

"It's a pity, Bradbrain," said Arthur, as he knelt down, "it's a pity you lose your temper about a harmless affair like this."

Bradbrain made no answer, but loaded, eager as a hunter whose hut is beleaguered with wolves. Like wolves his passions were indeed ravening round his better nature.

Arthur quickly knelt, and correcting his last shot by a hair's breadth at the sighting, got a "two." He was now one a-head, and his partisans gave a hearty cheer, which was led on by the jovial draper.

There were only two shots now left the champions. Bradbrain's last shot had been in the extreme righthand corner. His great desire now was to fire lower to the left, and so to win by a centre. He tore off the end of his cartridge with the neat precision of long habit; into the barrel went every black speck of powder, down went the bullet like a leaden thimble in its greased case. He took a long, careful aim, but the sun was in his eyes, and the wind high.

Whish, bang went the bullet.

Bradbrain remained kneeling, fixed in the attitude of firing. Up went the white flag.

"Never mind," he said, starting to his feet, "that ties us, and he's sure to miss this last time—curse his infernal luck!"

Arthur dropped on his knee; as he did so, there was a breathless silence, for all depended on this last shot. The chance was not merely in his skill, but on the momentary sunshine and wind. For a moment the little square of white, dotted with black, appeared to dance before him. The spectators seemed to mock and gibber. Then bracing himself up, he took a full aim. At that moment a furious gust of wind tore across the moor, and shook his rifle-barrel out of line.

For a moment after there was a lull for an instant—that instant Arthur seized. Just as the point of the foresight emerged above the low notch of the back sight, he fired. All he said, as he rose to his feet, was,

"I think that is a good one."

And so it was—very good. Up went the blue flag—no, the danger flag waved along the ground.

"A ricochet, by all that's lucky," cried Bradbrain, stamping for joy.

"No!—hurrah!—it's a fourer. Tolpedden has won the cup," cried Polworth, as the dark blue flag started up, and waved in the air over the marker's mantlet. The man had only gone out to make sure of the exact spot where the bullet had struck, which happened to be near the edge of the innermost square. Arthur had won the cup

by four points. He gave a sigh of relief, and slung his rifle over his shoulder.

Bradbrain dashed his gun on the ground.

"If I had had the commonest American rifle with a fixed sight," he said; "I'd have got ten more points! Who can aim with a sighting an inch thick?—hang and curse it!" then he sat down sullenly and wiped his gun clean.

"The cup's yours, and well won, too," said the adjutant to Arthur.

"We must chair him, I say, comrades!" roared Polworth, dashing up with three sturdy riflemen, who divested Arthur of his rifle, and lifted him up on their great shoulders, setting off at a smart trot through a lane instantly made for him through the crowd. Sampy and his friend, the three artists, Fitzhugh, Lucas, Maclean, and M. Chatelet followed, waving their hats, and shouting, "Hurrah! for the winner of the cup!"

Just as the bearers approached the carriage where Arthur's father and the Tregellases were, they paused a moment, to allow Arthur to wave his shako at them, in return for the tumult of white handkerchiefs that welcomed his victory.

There was his father, calmly proud and gravely glad; the lieutenant was waving his telescope, like a good-natured madman; the children, all under his command, were everyone waving something—comforter, stick, cap, or handkerchief; Mrs. Tolpedden was in a flutter of delight; Mrs. Tregellas placidly pleased, after her manner; Tre-

gellas and Trevena were laughing and shouting approval ; the Wavertons (all but Milly, who was crying with pleasure) saluted him in their own little precise way ; Miss Trevena was sternly approving ; but above all he caught a glimpse of one radiant face (such a face as seems to bend towards us from the clouds of a summer sunset), serene and joyous as ever ; and Lucy's eyes expressed a deeper pleasure (as it seemed to the credulous lover) than all the rest, and yet she waved no welcome.

Then back the sturdy fellows in grey and scarlet trotted him, to the tent where Lord Ros-trevor sat on a raised chair, with the big shining cup before him, peering from folds of silver paper. The gallant colonel, inwardly tired and cross, had put on his election and covert-side face, and was bowing to everyone, even to the cup, when there was no one else to whom to bow. In thronged the men in grey, saluting as they entered ; in came Arthur, blushing as the colonel presented him the cup, in a woolly speech, full of grand hesitations, and pompous nothings. Arthur returned thanks in a clever, manly way, wishing all success and prosperity to the 10th Royal North Cornish Rifles.

Up started Boscowen, with a bottle of sherry, and Polworth, knocking off the neck with his ram-rod, poured the wine into the cup. The men cheered as Arthur drank their health, graciously passing the cup to the colonel first, who circulated it round the tent.

Then followed a rough impromptu cold meat supper, provided by a confectioner at Bodmin; at this Mr. Hookem was truly great, and proposed Arthur's health in a flowing speech. At the supper Bradbrain was silent and sullen, and retired early into a smaller tent, where, for want of room, some of his own friends were supping.

"He's awfully cut up, Bradbrain is," said Boscawen to Arthur, as Bradbrain, with a "Good night all," left the tent. "He hates being outdone; he's been cursing you high and low to Vivian, and some of the other men, swearing you won by the merest fluke, and could not shoot a bit, and saying he should dispute the affair."

As Arthur rode home on his chestnut Rufus, an hour or so after, he overtook Bradbrain, to his surprise, riding moodily towards St. Petrock's.

"Why, Bradbrain," he said, touching his shoulder, "I thought you were home hours ago. I hope you don't take my winning in fair competition in dudgeon. You've beaten me before now."

Bradbrain did not look round, as if he was surprised, but replied :

"Well, I was riled, I tell you, at first. I'd made sure of licking you; but I shall soon forget the rile, that's my way, it's soon over with me; we both did our best. I always like to be A 1, if a fellow feels that, he's sure to get his snubs. I've been down to see a patient at Dunchine, that kept me. Good night; I don't feel inclined to talk."

They shook hands and parted.

That same evening, when Arthur's father reached Tolpedden, he found a sealed railway parcel, brought by express messenger from Bodmin, lying on his study table. It was an enclosure from Mordred's lawyers, Messrs. Fox and Shakell, of Plymouth, enclosing a subpoena, and a letter informing him that a bill would be instantly filed against him by them, on behalf of the Mayor and Corporation of St. Petrock's, as the prelude to a Chancery Suit on the question of the right to a tract of land on the Endellion cliffs, known by the name of "No Man's Land."

The cruel and subtle enemy was slowly but surely drawing his lines of circumvallation closer round the beleaguered city. The sudden springing of one of Fortune's mines now seemed to have thrown it open to Mordred's mercy.

CHAPTER XIII.

A PARLEY.

M R. MORDRED was like a magician, who, having drawn his circles, his trigons, his spheres, and stellar emblems, awaits within his talismanic ring the evil spirits he has summoned from beneath.

Having once set those great twin grinding wheels, Messrs. Fox and Shakell, at work, he knew the result as well as a manufacturer does who puts in

the pulp, and knows that whether he is present or not, out, in due time, will come the hot-pressed paper. That morning of the shooting for the cup his vulture eye had scented out in the *Times* the failure of the bank which had proved so ruinous to the Tolpeddens. With the promptitude of a great general, who sees the enemy's bayonets waver for an instant, he had instantly foreseen the importance to himself of such an accident. He was as eager to seize the advantage—that might be only momentary—as the leader of a storming party is to take advantage of the confusion produced by a powder cask blowing up in the breach he has to mount.

Certain now that his proud, stern adversary's surrender was a mere matter of time, he quietly rested behind his lines. The land, with its secret treasures, must now soon be his and Bradbrain's, for the Corporation of St. Petrock's were all either his own creatures, his debtors, or his dependents. He had already summoned Sampy to arrange for the purchase of the machinery and outfit of an old disused working called the Wheal Busy, near Port Isaac. The moment he had arranged the surrender of the land with Mr. Tolpedden, he and Sampy had arranged to meet (that very afternoon, in fact) and arrange the prospectus, the advertisement, and the working of the new mine. Not a moment would be lost by him, for he was greedy for money, eager to humiliate Tolpedden, restless to win county position and obtain social and

political power, and to erase all recollections of earlier peccadilloes, whether professional or commercial. That weak valetudinarian was strong enough for schemes dark and hidden as the workings of a mole. He was rejoiced, in a saturnine way, at Bradbrain's vexation at his defeat, because he hoped his feelings of annoyance might tend to alienate him from the Tolpeddens, and from a foolish, purposeless flirtation that threatened to alienate his partner from their joint interests.

While Bradbrain was sullenly receiving a levee of poor patients in the surgery, Mordred stood at the window, waiting for the postman to bring him a letter from Tolpedden.

There was quite a parliament of birds on the little shaven lawn. Two thrushes were unwinding coils of reticent earth-worms; several pert, knowing sparrows were chattering about the state of the food-market near one of the central round borders, not to mention a little wren, who was quiet and busy under the nearest box hedge. But for such things the banker had but little care. His one great thought was the postman, and his one anxiety whether or not he would bring a letter from Mr. Tolpedden.

Suddenly the door opened, and Bradbrain looked in; he held a draught in one hand in a phial which he was shaking, and did not look in the sweetest of tempers.

"Mordred," he said sharply, "I wish, old fellow, you could come and look at old Tregoze's tongue. I can't make out his symptoms, or whe-

ther the old boy isn't shamming—he's quite capable of it. He keeps saying he wants stimulants ; and there's that rascal Sampy, who was cheering so yesterday when that duffer won the cup—there he is preaching away about hour-glasses, and all that sort of thing. I thought it would look less suspicious to keep him till they were all gone, or shall I send him in to you ?—he keeps jawing so."

"I shan't see any of them this morning, I told you so before," said Mordred ; "and I don't want Sampy till I see what that man at Tolpedden writes."

"Oh ! that's it, is it ?" said Bradbrain, and snapped to the door, for Mordred's manner was dictatorial, and by no means pleasing.

"He *must* write," said Mordred, looking at the clock over the fire-place, which just then struck the half-hour. Half-past nine, that was the postman's time. At that very moment the postman, with the bag slung on his side, passed the garden gate. "He is going to defy me, that will delay us half a year," said the banker to himself, in his vexation. "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light ; but he must hoist the white flag. That failure must have crippled him too much for him to bear a Chancery suit. I know him ; he'll be all for raking together, and saving for that Benjamin—that youngster of his. I know these country gentlemen, or I ought to know them."

It was a fitful day ; dark and sunny by turns,

not a day to encourage a sad man, or to suggest hope. Great rolling grey clouds darkened to almost a London gloom, and then yielded to a cold but dazzling sunlight; a harsh wind drove the dead leaves into little waltzing, weird circles, and chased them round the dead dahlias, and the clumps of laurels, and gave them no respite till the lull came again, and the shadows once more spread like a dark vail over the grass.

Mr. Mordred had for the sixth time at least turned round to compare his own watch with the ebony cased clock on the mantelpiece, when a heavy, crunching sound of horse's hoofs made him look round in a startled way.

It was a tall, stalwart man, on a chestnut horse, that, breasting the great green gate, had forced it roughly open, its feet churning the wet gravel as it came at a quick walk to the front door. At the foot of the four white steps that led to the entrance the rider swung himself off with almost a soldier's quickness, and twisting the reins round the railing, sprang up the steps.

No one could easily forget that severe, thoughtful face. It was Mr. Tolpedden. For many a victim, and beside many a trap, had Mordred watched, but never for a lordlier victim than this; now he had him. What mingled thoughts of hatred, avarice, falsehood and hypocrisy, fear and hope, darted athwart the banker's mind in that instant of time!

Should he treat him in a cold, hurt way, as a

man who had been injured and insulted?—or should he rather receive the almost bankrupt man with a grave, Christian sympathy, as if regret at his losses had driven away all harsher feelings.

Yes; that was the right way to play his hand; for he had hidden reasons for retaining his hold over Tolpedden, whose discoveries in chemistry had roused at once the jealousy and cupidity of this bad man.

How few people like to be surprised in their own house by unexpected visitors! How few are frank and pure enough to bear an unexpected scrutiny! Some book must be put away from stricter people; some letter slipped under the desk; some secret be thrown into respectable shadow. So it was that Mordred hastily took down a large Bible, opened it at the psalms, and near it threw the *Times*, turned down at the Money Article. Unconscious satire of his own mind—religion used to help him on 'Change!

Just as he had sat down and assumed a contemplative position, the melancholy, suffering-looking butler threw open the door, and announced Mr. Tolpedden.

Mordred was a good actor—a life of deception requires good acting; for the world's audience do more than hiss—they can ruin, outlaw, and proscribe. He rose with an air of the blandest astonishment, offered a chair, bowed respectfully, and held out his cold, thin hand.

Mr. Tolpedden did not take the proffered hand,

but he sat down, and glanced at the paper lying on the table.

The two men were strongly contrasted—one well-dressed, with his military, bold, stern air; and the other valetudinarian, mean, servilely meek, and eminently secretive.

“I need scarcely say that I come on business—nothing else, as you may be assured, would have brought me to this house,” commenced the visitor.

“I do not know why—yet I am aware of the prejudice, the unjust——”

“Unjust!—was it not you, Mr. Mordred, who hoped to lead my father to alienate his Cornish estates from me, and who even tried two years ago to lead my own son into reckless and ruinous debt, snares from which his own good sense and principle alone preserved him?”

“You pervert everything—your heart may some day be softened—you will then——”

“I am not one of those who change—I am all granite when my opinion is once formed. I shall always regard you as I do now. You know, of course, what brought me here—I see you do, for the paper is open before you.”

Mordred bent his head to the wind, and looked as if he was standing by the side of a rich patient who was dying.

“Yes,” he said, slowly, “I could not fail to observe and lament over so painful and disastrous an occurrence. What can we do to aid you?”

Tolpedden eyed him with the simple-hearted

astonishment of a generous and unsuspicuous man.

"Aid me?" he said; "I want no aid, I only want time."

"And time you shall have, of course, my dear sir; we business men are not the hard and grinding persons that we are falsely represented. You have overdrawn very slightly at present—a mere few hundreds; let us make an advance—a loan. You have a son just going to college—there will inevitably be expenses——"

"Sir, I want no one to arrange my affairs for me."

"Now, this outburst is not merely unkind—it is unchristian."

"I want no definition of Christian duties from you. We have had business together before to-day, Mr. Mordred."

"I could throw a very different colour over the transactions you complain of, were this a fitting place, and did I care to vindicate a character that is unsullied; for I take God to witness this day between us, that I have no sin on my soul with respect to your affairs and your family."

"A saving qualification," said Mr. Tolpedden, bitterly; "but pray keep your adjurations, Mr. Mordred, for religious meetings, where they will bring you, I dare say, a 'Hear, hear,' from a brother speaker at least; it is no use our bandying words. I come here to offer to you, on reasonable terms, the land I refused you the other day in my haste. I was then a rich man; now—"

Mr. Mordred's complexion, I should have before mentioned, was of a livid, bluish tint, occasioned, as his enemies cruelly reported, by a quantity of nitrate of silver he had taken twenty years before, when he was under arrest somewhere in Somersetshire, on suspicion of defrauding a local bank of which he was a director, in order to induce his prosecutors to believe that he was dying from heart disease, and for that reason to let the matter drop ; but this, like most scandals, was probably only partly true. Even through this ghastly hue a faint hectic tinge of red arose ; it expressed excitement at this offer, but Mr. Tolpedden neither saw nor cared for the physiognomical change. He continued,

“ But I must first beg to know the cause of your anxiety for a mere useless field ? I have hitherto always made a rule never to allow a single acre of our patrimony to be alienated ; and only necessity compels me, even now, to deviate from it.”

“ The purpose involves a corporation secret. If I was to hint at a small station for the pilchard signalmen, I should give some clue to it. I am a mere agent.”

“ The other day, when you called on me, Mr. Mordred, you spoke of the field as necessary to enlarge an outlying farm ; you hardly take the trouble even to make your story consistent. Excuse my asking you to explain this discrepancy.”

“ My dear sir, much as I earnestly desire, even

through much contumely, to oblige you, I must firmly decline to disclose the secrets of our corporation. Suffice it to say (and I hope this will remove all suspicions from your mind) that we propose to erect there—well, something which will be, I believe, a benefit to our coast, a blessing to our fishermen, and a service to the whole nation. Are you satisfied that no meaner motives actuated me—that my *suppressio veri* was almost a duty?"

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Tolpedden, in a low voice; "trouble does make us suspicious. Perhaps I wrong you." He said this impatiently, as if not caring to express much regret. "I want a high price for the field."

"About that we shall not, I am sure, quarrel. Our corporation can afford to be generous in such matters. The field has been valued by the town surveyor at £500. We will give you £600."

Tolpedden covered his mouth with his hand, and rested his elbows on the table for a moment or two.

"I accept the terms," he said, looking up. "Give me the deed. I will write this afternoon to my solicitors at Bodmin, Messrs. Chetwynd, Strong, and Wrackem, to effect an immediate transfer."

"How soon," said the banker, with a galvanized smile, painful to look at, and putting his hands together in a devout way—"how soon business carried on in a Christian spirit comes to a pleasant and satisfactory conclusion! I am happy, sir, always to have dealings with Messrs. Chetwynd, Strong.

and Wrackem. They are Christian people, and devoted to the Missionary work."

Tolpedden detested cant; by that I mean religious talk out of place, and religious phrases desecrated by being obtruded Pharisaically, and for display.

"Whether they are in favour of doing good abroad, and not at home, I do not know; all I know is that they are good and prompt lawyers. I do not consult my lawyers on theological questions. Is the deed prepared? I am accustomed to promptitude in business matters—let me sign it at once. It is bad enough to lose a limb, without having it haggled at for weeks. Is the deed ready?"

"You attach too much importance to so slight a sacrifice, a sacrifice, too, not without its gracious compensations. The Lord is good to us; he tembers the wind—he rules the storm."

"Do not talk of slight sacrifices to me, sir; I know best whether they are slight or not. I tell you it is like flaying me, to reduce my son's inheritance—it is worse than—"

Here the door opened, and Bradbrain thrust in his head.

"Beg your pardon," he said, smiling; "how d'ye do? I see you are hard at business. I won't disturb you, but I want to talk to you, Mor-dred, about a case here presently."

As the door closed upon the young doctor's false but handsome face—

"Might I take the liberty of asking," said Mr.

Mordred, stooping forward deprecatingly to stir the fire, "as a man of business, long connected with your family, and, whatever our differences may have been, still deeply interested in its welfare, to what extent your losses in this infamous bank affair will amount? You once informed me, in the way of business, that you had, I think it was many thousand pounds in the hands of that unfortunate, and, I fear, I must add, dishonest firm."

At other times Tolpedden would have burst into a pelting storm of sarcasm and contempt; but sorrow had somewhat tamed his fierce nature.

"Yes," he said, staring at the red coals as if he was watching a ship—his own ship—go down, "more than twenty thousand pounds gone. All gone but the few miserable pounds my lawyers will squeeze out of the cheats, years hence, perhaps."

"Dear, dear, dear!" sighed Mordred, as he took up the *Times*, and read an extract from the money article. "The news this morning about the prospects of the unfortunate Bank are most unfavourable. The dividend, if any, will be very small. Several Cornish gentlemen will suffer deeply from the frauds of certain speculative directors."

Mordred read these fatal words slowly, and with provoking calmness.

"It's gone," said Tolpedden, with bitterness, and his head sunk for a moment as he spoke. "I thought it was. My curses on those villainous cheats! Oh! Arthur, my boy!—my boy! Now,

sir,"—he rose sternly—"it has, perhaps, given you some pleasure to see me in a moment of despondency. Give me the deed. The money I want is not for myself, it is for my son. He shall go to college, if I starve for it!"

"I pray heaven to touch your heart, Mr. Tolpedden, and the hearts of those who may have planted these cruel suspicions in your breast. I am innocent of any intention of wounding your feelings. I would as soon trample on a bleeding and mutilated man."

"Your comparison is somewhat insulting. How do you know what wealth I may not still possess?"

"Far be it from me to intrude into family secrets, which are beyond my province. My previous questions, however severely you may judge them, were the result of sincere sympathy."

"I neither want your sympathy, nor that of any man living," said Mr. Tolpedden, buttoning his coat fiercely across his chest. "Come, sir, the deed—let us have it over."

"The great chemical discoveries expected of you by the scientific world can be unknown to no educated person," said Mr. Mordred. "The discovery of a new incorrodible metal might be of more value to England than the discovery of a dozen new planets."

"You flatter me," was the only reply Mr. Mordred's words elicited, though for once they seemed weighted by real conviction.

"The deed will be ready to-morrow," he said.

"I will hurry Messrs. Fox and Shackel's clerks, and the copy shall reach you to-night, by hand. Would you like the money now?"

"It is immaterial. Well, I think, yes. It will save another interview, for the clerk can bring the deed to me."

"That is hardly kind," said Mordred, with a sickly and rather spiteful smile; "hardly kind, or even fair, as between man and man. You will have to receive" (here he drew a paper with figures on it from his pocket) "£252 10s. 1½d., having overdrawn your account with us to the amount that will make up the £600 purchase money."

Mr. Tolpedden stood as if he was turned to stone. His eye did not lose its fixity, but his blood seemed to cease flowing. Then he put forth his hand slowly and took up his banking-book that lay on the table.

"Yes," he said, "it is so. Well, I am ready to sign the deed whenever the clerk brings it. Good morning, Mr. Mordred; you can send the balance by your clerk at your leisure."

A moment more he had swung the front-door behind him, and leaped upon his horse.

"That man is proud as Satan," said Mordred to himself; "but I think I stung him once or twice. He has evidently got a few thousands left, or he would never keep it up so. I'd break him quite, but that I want to get a hold over those inventions of his, and that troublesome fellow

Bradbrain would jib if I ran him too hard. £252 10s. 1½d. won't keep a youngster three years at Baliol, and he must come to me for money, for he's bent on bringing up that lad as a restless spendthrift, as he himself has been. Two professions given up, and now turned amateur chemist. Proud fool, he'd better take care."

He rang the bell; in slided the pale, unhappy butler.

"Send in Mr. Sandoe," was the bland order.

In half an hour^{more} the prospectus of the new mine was well forward.

A mournful ride home had Mr. Tolpedden—a cold shower in his face, and the dead leaves blowing disconsolately round him.

"That sanctimonious rascal," he pondered, "thinks he will get some hold over my inventions. I see through him, as if his heart was made of glass. I may want his help, to get clear of these difficulties—I will make use of the sconndrel's cupidity. I can get free in two years with prudence; and I'll bear with him for the present, for Arthur's sake."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DRIVE TO PORTNEWETH.

IT was the morning after this interview that Bradbrain sat in his sanctum, waiting for an answer to a letter of his.

The sanctum was not a lively room; it was one

of those little dark square corner places that architects sometimes leave in building a house, as if it was that little troublesome angle of the puzzle that never can be got into the box. It looked out through a small window on a damp, paved garden walk, leading to the stables, and used by the poorer patients on their way to the surgery. There was a small, cold-looking book-case, with glass doors and green curtains. At one side of the window, and on the top of this, stood half a dozen dusty, unequal-sized bottles full of spirits of wine, and containing specimens. Over the fire-place were placed two or three guns locked in a brass rack, while in a corner of the room lay a bundle of South American spears, sticks, and whips; on the walls hung several of Landseer's dogs, and other sporting prints; while over the door were visible a huge pair of Mexican spurs, a lasso, and some horse trappings.

Bradbrain was restless—there was an hour before it was time to start on his rounds—it was too little time for a game of billiards at the chief inn, and too long for a cigar. He rose, stared at one of the guns, then took down a whip, bent it and tried it—he took a spill from the mantelpiece, and pleated it into various shapes; then he sat down in front of the fire, and planting a foot on either hob, rang the bell sharply; lastly, taking out a whisker-brush with a looking-glass back, he looked at his great shining white teeth in it complacently.

In glided Stonecot, the pale butler.
“Stonecot, bring me a brandy and soda directly.
Is that boy Dick returned yet?”
“Just returned, sir—in the kitchen, sir.”
“Send the idle rascal in.”
“Yes, sir; and, if you please, sir, here’s a letter just sent from St. Petrock’s—waiting for an answer.”
“Give it here.”

Bradbrain leaned back in his chair, and tore open the letter, as the door closed on the stealthy Stonecot. The note was from Arthur Tolpedden, and ran in this wise :

“St. Petrock’s, November 18th.

“MY DEAR BRAD,

“I came here this morning, to drive Mrs. and Miss Tregellas to see the Robinson Crusoes, à la Raphael, at Portneweth; to my great vexation, I find their grey horse is gone lame last night, and the little man ridden off to Bodmin on the roan, to attend a church opening. In this dilemma could you lend us your chestnut mare? She shall be taken as much care of as if she was solid gold.

“Yours ever,

“ARTHUR TOLPEDDEN.

“Donald Bradbrain, Esq.”

It must have been full ten minutes that Bradbrain remained with one hand on the mantelpiece,

his head bent down and eyes fixed steadily on a tiger skin foot-stool that lay at his feet; all the time he kept the letter crunched in his hand—at the end of that time he looked up, drew out his whisker-brush again, and smiled, so that all his teeth glistened.

Doctors tell you that the cobra's poison spreads so quickly through the human system, that even ligaments a moment after the bite cannot stop its upward progress to the heart. If you give a certain poison to rabbits, a few moments after its subtle crystals are found not only in the animal's brain, but even in the glassy humours of the eye. As quickly and terribly had the devilish promptings to a great crime already permeated through the passages leading to Bradbrain's stony and bad heart. No pang of conscience could now stop him, for he had long ceased to listen to that inner and divine voice.

At that moment a little dark figure passed the window, the next instant there came a sharp tap at the door.

"Come in," cried Bradbrain, as he took out a penknife, and began to carelessly trim his filbert nails.

It was Dick, the London boy, looking more cunning, smart, and impudent than ever. He was red with running, and had a scratch on his left cheek, that was still bleeding. On his arm he carried a small basket, the lid of which was covered with oil-skin. He scraped his shoes on the mat,

and thrust one hand into the basket, while he waited for Bradbrain's questions.

"Well, the letter?—was it in the hole in the tree where I told you?"

"Yes, sir, but some leaves had fallen in and covered it up, and I was very nigh at first coming away without it."

"It's well you didn't, or I'd have half flayed you. Come, where is it?—hand it up."

The boy dived into the basket, and, with a cunning smile, drew out a little three-cornered pink note.

"Oh! don't it smell sweet, neither!" he said, familiarly, and half to himself, as he placed it in his master's eager hand.

"There, now go and get my horse ready, then put on Pepita's harness, and take her down to Mr. Tregellas's, but first come to me for a message. Stop, there's half-a-crown. I've just been round to the stable—Pepita is not the thing at all this morning, Dick. I don't like her eye, and her coat is rather starey. I must make her a bolus. Come back in ten minutes; now mind, ten minutes. Where did you get that scratch, Dick?"

"Why, that was that young Beswetherick, who's just come to the inn at Boscastle. He stopped me, and began larking and chaffing, and giving me his sauce, and wanted to look into my basket, but I didn't want him to see the three-corner, so I gave him one on the snuff-box, and then we had a bit of a spar."

Bradbrain laughed, and waved Dick away. The instant he was gone the Doctor tore open the letter, which he had first kissed a dozen times.

The contents of that dangerous pink paper were these :

“DEAR MR. BRADBRAIN,—Do not come to-day. They are suspicious.”

Bradbrain tossed the letter into the yellow pyramid of forked and living flame that went wavering up the chimney. The letter flew up the chimney instantly, like an exorcised devil, and floated back the next instant, driven by some downward and reactionary draught, a little black ghost of its former self, spangled with little golden sparks, that twinkled and went out. It was a type of that violent but foolish passion that beguiles both wise men and fools, and is the source of such joy, and of such ineffable misery.

“Curses on them all!” he cried, “for a pack of pretentious fools, with their dismal respectabilities and their frozen-blooded virtues. If they were to shut Tiny in an hermetic case, they shouldn’t keep me from her.”

“Brandy and soda, sir,” said a rapid voice at his elbow. It was that detestable Stonecot, who had come in unobserved while he was muttering to himself, and now held a tray before him.

“That’ll do; put it down,” said Bradbrain, angrily, “and leave the room. I’m busy about something else.”

He then, with one sharp blow against the mantel-piece, beat off the green neck of the soda-water bottle, and dashed its contents over the brandy, which he drank off at a draught.

"I'm steadier now," he said, holding out his hand, as he darted into the surgery, and came upon master Dick, playing with the pill-maker, rolling out long sections of black paste, and cutting it up again into cross pieces.

"You little devil's limb," said Bradbrain, knocking him off the stool with a backhanded slap, "haven't I told you dozens of times never to touch anything here? There, no more crying, here's some liquorice for you. Pepita will take anything from your hand—eh?"

"Yes, if you please, sir," said Dick, whimpering. "I always feeds her, and holds the measure for her."

As he uttered these words, Bradbrain took down several bottles, and began bruising up an electuary.

"That's cantharides," gasped the boy, in astonishment, as Bradbrain reached over for a little gilt-labelled bottle in a compartment close to his head.

"Ah! bless me, so it is; then give me the next one. Dick, go into the kitchen and ask Jane for a square lump of stale crumb."

The instant Dick was gone Bradbrain poured out half a dozen shrivelled-up pieces of the greenish fly from the bottle Dick had protested against, dashed it back into its place, and then ground

the fresh ingredients rapidly and fiercely into the electuary.

“That boy’s a devilish deal too sharp, I must get rid of him—he knows a deuced sight too much to suit me.”

Dick returned with the white square of bread, into the centre of which Bradbrain squeezed a large lump of the electuary, which he then plugged up with some sweet gum, and closed with a piece of bread, which he also gummed in.

“Now, Dick, Mr. Tolpedden is going to drive Pepita to-day to Portneweth ; you take the pony, and follow him—you have medicine to deliver there for old Mr. Penrose’s servant—follow the party home, and when they reach St. Petrock’s ride up and say that I hoped Mr. Tolpedden would drive the mare home himself, as I especially want to see him. While they are busy helping out the ladies, you make Pepita swallow this—remember, she mustn’t on any account wait for it till she gets back to the stable, it must be given her with exercise, and mind let no one see you give it ; pretend it is part of your own bread and cheese, or I turn you away to-morrow. Tell no one at any time you have given it her. If you like to go on foot, you can come back with Mr. Tolpedden. If you do all that I wish, you and I will be good friends, and will get on well together ; I shall keep you in mind. You shan’t want bread and cheese, whoever does.”

“All serene, sir,” said Dicky, and away he went

with Pepita, after Bradbrain had patted her, somewhat regretfully.

Bradbrain watched them as they went down the St. Petrock's road, and till they turned the corner.

"Mr. Mordred, sir, has sent to say he wants you to make up his tonic directly, he feels very weak this morning," said Stonecot, who met Bradbrain at the back gate.

"Old swindler!" thought Bradbrain to himself. "There he is concocting his plots with soapy Sampy, and he wants me to think his life shaky, and all that sort of thing. I don't believe, for my part, he ever touches the medicine, for fear I should work him some mischief. By George! we've a nice opinion of each other—'pon my word we have. Old thief, he little knows what mischief I've been up to this morning. Poor Pepita!"

Arthur met the boy half a mile from St. Petrock's, and was so impatient that he instantly mounted the mare, dashed off to the Tregellas's stables, put her in the chaise, and brought her round to the front.

There, to his great annoyance, he found that Miss Trevena, who was there on a visit at the rectory, was going to escort Lucy in the place of Mrs. Tregellas, who was busy seeing some hams salted, and who argued that a similar absence on a former occasion had led to far too much salt prunel being used, to the infinite injury of the meat forbidden by Mahomet, and favoured by Protestantism.

Out came Lucy, very pretty and neat, in an Havannah-brown dress, a fur-trimmed paletot, and a delectable little bonnet, hemming in the daintiest of good-natured faces, and out came Miss Trevena, stern as one of the spinster Parcæ, carrying wrappers and plaids, and bent on taking her pleasure as a confessed obtrusion, and in a stern and protesting way.

Up bounded Lucy into the back seat (she was to ride in front coming back), and up ascended stiffly Miss Trevena. The children shouted approbation, and "Don't I wished," and got dangerously near the horse, and were eventually taken in by Kitty more or less in tears, but without serious injuries; a flick of the whip, a shout of joyous farewell to Mr. Tregellas at the window, and the three were off.

There are two sorts of spinsters—the philanthropic and the sour. Those who do good to men, and those who seek to revenge their wrongs on the wretched race that has slighted them. Miss Trevena was of a mixed type; the bitter-philanthropic—with high standards for other people, on which she perpetually suspended evil-doers, as scarecrows to warn their fellows.

"Two is company, and three is none," she said, as soon as they were well started. "Now, tell me frankly, Mr. Tolpedden, don't you wish me miles away?"

There was something odious to a lover's mind in this blurting out the possibility of pleasant flirta-

tion, but he could not be angry with Lilly, smiling at him as he turned.

So, somewhat at the expense of truth, he assured Miss Trevena that he was the happiest of men in her society. The Jesuits, when they wish to tell what they call a "religious lie," state a perverted truth, with certain mental reserves that they believe venial. Arthur's reserve in this case meant this : " Somebody must be with us, and it may as well be you, old Atropos, as anyone else; moreover, to stop disagreeable things, I shall continue unceasing compliments to you."

Lucy came to Arthur's rescue, and dexterously turned the conversation.

" Is it true, Mr. Tolpedden" (there was something so naturally caressing in Lucy's manner that no one, however vain, could take it as shown only to himself) that your uncle, the lieutenant, has taken that civil Coast-Guard man as his *factotum*?"

" Yes, it's quite true, and a useful fellow he is. They get on capitally together. It is delicious to see the lieutenant in his hammock, with Bobby in his arms, issuing orders for the day. Walker has got a story about seeing a blue flame at night at Endillion, which the fishermen say only rises when there is metal below."

" I always feel inclined to believe those superstitions. I know it is very silly of me," said Lucy.

It was delightful all this time to hear Lilly cheer on Pepita by calling out her name in a murmur-

ing, cooing, encouraging sort of way that was sweetest music to Arthur's ear.

Just then they passed Bottreaux Church, a plain building with a square tower, a little way off the road, and only a field or so from the precipice of Willapark Point, and the abyss called the Black Pit.

"Did you ever hear Mr. Hawker's lines on the Silent Tower?" asked Arthur of Miss Trevena.

"Oh! he is such a dreadful High Churchman. (Logic, thou art unknown to women.) Longfellow is the only poet I care about, and Tennyson—sweet Tennyson!"

"For my own part, for manly vigour, variety of invention, I prefer Browning; but he is so obscure and thorny, and wants the finish and harmony of the Laureate."

"Oh! do repeat those beautiful lines of Mr. Hawker's, about Forrabury Tower; I am so fond of them," said Lucy piteously, leaning forward between the speakers.

Who could resist that pretty suppliant.

Arthur launched boldly into the fine ballad, which, indeed, well deserves to be remembered.

"The ship rode down, with courses free,
The daughter of a distant sea;
Her sheet was loose, her anchor stored,
The merry Bottreaux bells on board.

'Come to thy God in time!
Rung out Tintagel's chime.
'Youth, manhood, old age past,
Come to thy God at last!'

"The pilot heard his native bells
 Hang on the breeze in fitful swells.
 'Thank God!' with reverent brow he cried,
 'We make the shore with evening's tide.'

'Come to thy God in time!'
 It was his marriage chime.
 'Youth, manhood, old age past,'
 His bell must ring at last.

"'Thank God, thou whining knave, on land,
 But thank at sea the steersman's hand,'
 The captain's voice above the gale;
 'Thank the good ship and ready sail.'

'Come to thy God in time!'
 Sad grew the booming chime.
 'Come to thy God at last!'
 Boomed heavy on the blast.

"Up rose that sea, as if it heard
 The mighty master's signal word.
 What thrills the captain's whitening lip?
 The death groans of his sinking ship.

'Come to thy God in time!'
 Swung deep the funeral chime.
 'Grace, mercy, kindness past,
 Come to thy God at last!'

"Still, when the storm of Bottreaux waves
 Is waking in his weedy caves,
 Those bells, that sullen surges hide,
 Peal their deep tones beneath the tide.

'Come to thy God in time!'
 Thus saith the ocean chime.
 Storm, billow, whirlwind past,
 'Come to thy God at last!'"

"Oh! it is beautiful!—so full of deep feeling; the legend never should be touched again," said Lucy, clapping her little hands.

"It has some eloquent touches," said Miss Trevena, with a severity of judgment peculiar to that lady.

It was a glorious November morning, the frost lay still in rough white bloom on the road-side grass, wherever the shadows still remained. In the sunshine the frosted dew sparkled with trembling and melting jewelry. The cloud shadows ran before them, as if in frolic, as they drove on.

The road was nearly parallel to the sea, and on the bleak headlands the sun and shadow lay in their old harmony. The great ocean itself, all in a grey glitter, seemed breathing softly in its sleep; here and there only a white feathered wave broke its tranquillity; love, with its subtle alchemy, invested with a new beauty every object upon which Arthur's eye rested.

"Don't you find it very much pleasanter and quieter at the Rectory, Lucy," said Miss Trevena, with a judicial air, "now those noisy creatures are gone home for the vacation?"

The noisy creatures were Mr. Tregellas's three pupils.

"Well, we *are* quieter; but still we rather miss them. Mr. Lucas is so full of spirits, Mr. Maclean is so clever, and Mr. Fitzhugh's such a good talker."

"Well, there's no accounting for taste—by-the-

bye, Mr. Tolpedden, they tell me that the corporation of Boscastle have bought one of your father's fields in the cliff, to erect a watch-house for the men who give notice of the pilchards' coming. Is this so?"

"My father never consults me on business. I have not heard anything of it. It sounds a foolish business. A man can surely stand on the cliff and wave a bush to guide fishing-boats without having a house built for him."

"Why, I declare if there isn't that boy of Mordred's riding after us," said Arthur, turning and looking back.

"So it is," said Miss Trevena, sharply. "I suppose he has got some medicine to bring to Portneweth—idle little monkey!—there isn't a worse boy in the whole country—why didn't he ask us to take it?—but there, those boys, they're all alike. Do you know, I actually caught him the other day pulling feathers out of one of our Guinea fowls."

"Isn't it a beautiful drive?" said Lucy, to Miss Trevena, whose cloak she adjusted, for the hood had blown aside.

"Yes; but I ought to be at home—nothing goes on without me; there's that Emily, a mere cipher, and if the house was to burn down, Mr. Trevena would do nothing—he is so unpractical; as for that foolish charge, it has ruined him with the bishop, I feel sure."

"Do you see much of the Wavertons now?" said Arthur, maliciously.

"No ; but they are making St. Tudy's, I believe, quite a popish place, with their crosses, paintings, and nonsense—they're quite rude to me, and *so* ungrateful to John."

"Not dear little Milly ?" said Lucy, piteously.

"Oh ! she's a little affectionate foolish thing enough ; but the other sisters are abominably rude and ungrateful, after John almost saving their brother's life, too—but it is like all the world—they're all alike."

The poor world gets a good many of these rubs—but it moves on.

They were now approaching Portneweth. The road took a sudden turn to the left, and the little bay was visible below, in all its beauty. As they drove fast down the hill towards the village, a small sailing-boat suddenly came skimming towards the shore. All at once down went the sail, and out leaped Hewer on to the sand, his sketch-book and moist colour-box under his arm.

Arthur shouted. Up he ran to them. He doffed his grey wide-awake to the ladies, and shook Arthur warmly by the hand.

"Why, how's this ?" he said. "Fisher told us you weren't coming till three o'clock, and now it's only one. Well, we are glad to see you, nevertheless. I've been out sketching the Black Pit ever since nine o'clock—oh ! we work hard, ladies, we men of colour—yes, we do."

"Oh ! let us see the sketch, Mr. Hewer," said Lucy ; "I do so love painting."

Fisher produced the sketch, “a mere wash in,” he called it. It was spirited, with a free run of sea-round, bleak, wet rocks, yeasty with froth, and a red spar floating to the silty beach, rainbow-coloured, with bubbly, sparkling spray. “Wants harmony and depth, a red-legged chough or so to carry the warm colour through.”

“Oh! I think it is perfect,” said Lucy.

By this time the ladies had alighted at the “Boscawen Arms,” and from thence they walked to Fisher’s and Dodgeson’s lodgings, at a farmer’s house, just outside the village. They found Dodgeson, gaunt and quaint as ever, drawing a book illustration on a block of whitened box-wood. His model, an old fisherman, sat before him, stiff, and ruefully uncomfortable, in a new purple jersey, that fitted tight as a coat of mail. Fisher was standing at an immense easel, painting a picture of “Dr. Johnson doing penance in the market-place.” His palette, gay with a ring of brilliant crimsons, indigos, and emerald greens, was on his thumb, which also retained a sheaf of brushes. The room was hung with sketches, caricatures in charcoal, and was pleasantly littered with half-open portfolios, books of costume, newspapers, proofs, wood-blocks, tin tubes of colour, and bottles of oil and soapy-looking medium. Dodgeson had on a red fez, and Fisher a black Andalusian turban cap.

They were delighted to see Arthur and his party.

“There, old boy,” said Dodgeson, paying and

dismissing the model, "now cut your lucky ; mind, we shall want you to-morrow, same hour. Now, then, ladies, make yourselves comfortable, while we clear the place, and get the lunch ready. Mrs. Polglase, please to come and lay the cloth, quick and bring the chops, and a gridiron."

The room was soon cleared ; to work went the three men at cooking, all the time laughing, talking, and bantering, like giant-children, and pleasant, clever, good-natured, happy-go-lucky fellows as they were.

"We're off to-morrow, you know," said Fisher, as he scraped his palette clean, apologizing to the ladies all the time, "so I am so glad you've come. Babylon calls to us—St. John's Wood beckons us—we must away."

"Hear a solo on the viol-di-gambo, 'Come little airy spirit.' Mr. Fisher will oblige," said Dodgeson, with a grim smile, as he folded a block in thin blue paper, and stroked his beard.

"Hookem was here an hour ago to wish us good-bye," said Hewer ; "he is off, too, to-morrow —perhaps we shall go together. Can't you fancy him, Miss Tregellas, conducting the removal of the luggage-waggons, like Sir Thomas Moore leading the retreat to Corunna ?"

Lucy laughed, and asked if they would be sorry to leave Portneweth.

"Shan't we !" said Dodgeson, cleverly tossing a half-done chop on the gridiron. "Why, it's a regular little marine paradise, and we pull together

very well. Such prawns, such lobsters, such sketching, such groups of fishermen!"

"We had a great lark the other day, Tolpedden," said Fisher. "There was an inundation in the High Street here—we were flooded—all afloat—had to make a raft to stand on and paint—half our traps drifted down the village—canvasses brought in from the post-office—oil bottles recovered at the 'Boscawen Arms'—boys bringing in recovered property from the Crockerton Road. That old fellow you saw is our factotum—goes messages, sits for his head, chops wood, rows, gets us prawns and haddock, hires us horses, takes us down mines. Hookem recommended him to us, and we find him a first-rate fellow. Now then, you duffer, don't you see you're burning that chop? Hewer, R.A., cut Miss Tregellas some bread. Miss Trevena, let me offer you this seat near the fire."

While the lunch was taking place, with much pleasant talk and joking, Bradbrain's emissary had reached the "Boscawen Arms." It suddenly entered into Dick's ill-conditioned mind that it would spoil all his day, and his chance of dinner at an aunt's who lived at Portneweth, if he hurried back to give Pepita the bolus at St. Petrock's. He had given his message to Mr. Tolpedden, and if he waited now, and saw them off, and then at the last moment gave the bolus, he should be free for an hour or two, and master would be as wise as ever.

In about an hour Fisher came running to the

inn to order the horse to be put to. Dick helped the ostler to do this, and followed the carriage out of the stables to the front door. As the ladies were being helped into the carriage, and the ostler was being paid, Dick, who had been playing with Pepita's bit, suddenly drew out the square of bread and offered it to her unobserved. She took it quietly from the well-known hand; one gulp, and it was gone. Then Dick, basket on arm, sauntered away—his work was done.

"What are you idling about for, boy?" said Miss Trevena, sharply.

"If you please, ma'am, I've come with medicine, and I've got to wait for some fish at Mrs. Polglase's."

"Is Bradbrain's mare quiet in harness?" said Dodgeson, patting Pepita, who rather winced under his hand—it was unusual in her.

"Quiet as a lamb. Gently, gently, old girl," said Arthur. "She knows she's going home. Miss Trevena, Miss Tregellas, are you all right? Good-bye, old fellows, take care of yourselves. I shall see you some day in London."

"Good-bye—remember Abbey Road."

"Good-bye."

"Have you got the prawns under the seat?"

"Yes, thank you."

"Good-bye—addio!"

The men waved their caps, the ladies their hands, and off sprang Pepita at a somewhat fierce trot.

"How can you carry a loaded pistol?" said Lucy, now seated by Arthur's side. "Isn't it dangerous?"

"Oh! it's dreadful to think of, isn't it?" said Miss Trevena.

"I always carry a revolver, Miss Trevena, when I go to the coast, in case I should get a shot at a chough—it's such good practice."

"It's very cruel, sir," said Lucy; "and you ought to be ashamed of it."

By this time Pepita's pace had so quickened that it had almost grown to a canter.

"How fast we are going—it seems quite dangerous," said Miss Trevena, looking forward in alarm.

"I do really think there is something the matter, Mr. Tolpedden," said Lucy, as Pepita set his ears back, and snorting, struck out at a tremendous pace down hill.

Arthur was quite calm.

"Don't be alarmed," he said.

"I think the throat lash presses on her, or the saddle galls her. Let us pull her up, and get down and alter it."

"Oh! pray don't, we shall all be killed!—don't get down!" cried Miss Trevena, turning very pale, but still stern.

"No, I see it is not safe—indeed it is not safe," said Lucy, hiding her face for a moment with her hands. "She is going faster now."

"It is nothing. I'll stop her easily," said Ar-

thur ; "she is only frightened at something. See how wet her skin is, and how she trembles."

Planting his feet firmly against the foot-board, and twisting the reins round his strong hands, Arthur dragged at the mare's mouth, till his grip relaxed from sheer exhaustion. But it was of no more avail than if he had set his strength against an express train ; the mare, her eyes swimming red with feverish fear, froth breaking from her nostrils, and steam rising from her coat, kicked, plunged, and the next moment broke into a mad-dened gallop, furious, and irrestrainable, as if a thousand howling wolves were behind her.

The speed, that tossed the carriage from side to side, was dangerous enough on the level, but imminent peril was before them, for at a turn of the road half a-mile off a deep ditch yawned on each side, and two blocks of granite narrowed the passage. There, if Pepita's speed did not slacken, certain death awaited them, in one tremendous crash, that would destroy all three as if a huge cannon-ball had been met full butt.

Miss Trevena screamed, and would instantly have frantically leaped out, had not Lucy held her down with resolute despair.

"We are really in danger?" she whispered to Arthur.

"Yes, dearest," was the impassioned answer. Imminent danger seemed to excuse that phrase. "I cannot hold her in now—it is all over. Stop!" he cried, a sudden thought flashing in an instant

through his brain, "this may serve us," and he drew his revolver from his belt.

Miss Trevena was too much paralyzed by fear to be roused even by this. Lucy was a brave girl; she saw that Arthur kept his head, and she had entire confidence in him. She only turned away her face, and clung towards him, still retaining her grasp of the terrified woman who sat beside her. Arthur's lips were pressed close, as if they were steel; he cocked the revolver and spoke hurriedly,

"For God's sake hold fast, Lucy, when I fire, and hold that mad woman firm, too, for we shall have a spill for it even now. If I can only shoot the mare through the brain, I'll drop her before she smashes us against those stones. God preserve you, dearest! I don't care for myself. When I say *now*, hold firm!"

Lucy made no reply, but pressed his arm with a soft pressure. There was the eloquence of a thousand orators in it.

"Now!"

Arthur fired; there was a thin jet of fire, the bullet cut through Pepita's left ear. Then came a gush of blood, the mare slackened her speed for a moment, shook her head, and then burst into a gallop ten times more frenzied than before.

Quick as thought, Arthur pulled again, with a sure and electric aim. The bullet of this second barrel entered just under Pepita's right eye, for it was fired slantingly. The mare gave one desperate

leap forwards, then fell on her knees, and dropped dead in the road, as suddenly as if struck by lightning, so sure had been the aim.

The tremendous shock, so instantaneous and convulsive, upset the chaise, and Arthur and the two ladies were dashed insensible to the ground.

* * * * *

Lucy was the first to recover. Giddy and half-stunned, she rose on her knees and looked around her. There was Arthur, pale and insensible, his face smeared with blood from a wound in his right temple, lying across the dead mare, the reins still firmly twisted round his left hand, the pistol still clutched in his right.

"He is dead!—great God of Heaven, he is dead!" she cried, as, throwing herself on her knees, she felt to see if his heart still beat.

It beat only faintly, but still it beat; thank God for that! With trembling haste she loosened his necktie, lifted his head, and staunched the wound on his brow with her handkerchief. At that moment Miss Trevena staggered slowly to her feet; she screamed when she saw Arthur still insensible.

"Oh! he is dead!—he is dead!" cried Miss Trevena, and then groaned like a banshee, helpless and useless in her terror.

"No, no, he is not dead!—he is not dead!" gasped Lucy, who retained her self-possession; "run, run to that cottage we passed half a mile

back, and bring help, while I bathe his face with some water from that pool by the mile-stone—quick, quick, if you have any heart, quick!—every moment is worth hours—he will die for want of help!"

Away sped Miss Trevena, while Lucy flew to the little pool by the great granite block, and scooping off the green scum, filled Arthur's felt hat with water; she then sprinkled his face, moistened his hands, and chafed his wrists, like an angel of love and mercy as she was.

Oh! the mortal agony of that moment, as she bent over that pale face, from which life seemed so fast ebbing.

Suddenly the eyelids slowly lifted; the eyes looked forth listless, but smiling; they were like those of a person who has awoke from some ghastly struggle with a nightmare. With a look of ineffable tenderness and gratitude, such as a dying soldier may give when a vision of home and love rises before him in his last delirium, he put his hand in hers, tried to press it, and gasped out the words,

"Dearest, how I love—thank you—God have mercy—send to—" then he fell back again in a swoon.

In the meantime, Miss Trevena—her hair down and bonnet torn off, while scuttling towards the distant cottage—had been suddenly confronted at a turn of the road by a burly gentleman, in a gleaming white waistcoat, who was trotting along on a sturdy cob.

"Why, good heavens, Miss Trevena, is it you? —what is the matter?" was his exclamation as he pulled up his horse.

It was Mr. Hookem.

"Oh, for gracious heavens," she cried, "do gallop to that next cottage, my dear Mr. Hookem, and get help. I'm so faint. We've all been thrown by that dreadful horse, and young Arthur Tolpedden's almost killed—if he isn't dead already."

In a moment Hookem, without discussing the matter, had struck across the fields to the distant cottage, and in ten minutes more Arthur was lying on the miner's bed, while Hookem was galloping to St. Petrock's for the doctor.

CHAPTER XV.

CAPTAIN SANDOE.

A FEW days only after the accident, it was reported generally in the neighbourhood of St. Petrock's, St. Tudy's, St. Nectan's, and Portneweth; indeed, the rumour soon ran as far as Bodmin one way, and Port Isaac the other, that copper had been discovered in an old working in the field that Mr. Mordred had bought of the Corporation of St. Petrock's, and which Mr. Tolpedden of Tolpedden had recently surrendered to them, to prevent incurring the expense of a Chancery suit, with which he had been threatened.

In a troglodyte country like Cornwall, where thousands of men spend half their lives underground searching for metals, such rumours become matters of engrossing interest, both in the miner's cottage and the nobleman's drawing-room. Gangs of miners all over the north of Cornwall could have been heard discussing the new topic daily as they walked home from their mines. The fishermen discussed it as they set their lobster pots, or hauled at their nets; the small farmers and shopkeepers were eager to get shares in the new speculation; the gentry were anxious to obtain reliable reports of the state of the lode.

The story set on foot by Mr. Mordred was, that the metal had been discovered by accident while sinking the foundation of a "hewer" signal-station. Already, with the subtle promptitude of his nature, he had purchased the machinery and fittings of a disused mine near Port Isaac, the Wheal Busy, and had issued a glowing prospectus of the new undertaking, which he had christened the Wheal Fortune.

The Tolpeddens had received the news with anger and distrust. They suspected some trick, but yet they doubted the intelligence. Cornish by descent, they had learned to mistrust the sanguine anticipations of mining speculators, and the records of the family bore no very favourable testimony to the Endellion mine, that had been as a quicksand to swallow thousands after thousands, till the death of Arthur's grandfather stopped the

reckless experiments. "It is human errare," as Lucas used to say; and Mr. Tolpedden, although of a wide and generous nature, was not sorry to see a mischievous scoundrel like the banker of St. Petrock's birdlimed by such speculations.

The day week of the accident reported in our last chapter, two waggons, laden with huge rusty cog-wheels, whipsidery pulleys, disjointed fragments of steam-engines, and miners' gads and crowbars, and drawn by four strong horses each, drew up about noon at the door of the "Three Choughs," at Boscastle, the scene of Lucas's memorable brewing of the fatal Rumfustian.

The drivers and their captain, a short, weazly man, in a brown great-coat, who was livid with cold, leaped down to take a glass together.

The weazly man was our old friend Sampy Sandoe, now Captain Sandoe of the Wheal Fortune Mine, a man of authority, and one "who knew tin."

"Tes cold on the downses, my dear," said Titus, one of the drivers, to the ostler, beating himself under the arms, as if in self-mortification.
"How dy'e fadgy, comraad?"

"Bravely—bravely, thankee. What shall I get ye, gentlemen?"

"Rum," said Sampy, "hot with—'tis a brave tidy stap we've come, Chrestian friends—and lemon, comraad. We've come in unity—blessed unity! Hallelooliah! And we're going to open a champion lode—pure copper from grass to centre, and all found by the blessed rod."

There was a vulgar bragging exultation about Sampy that lent such vigour to his naturally loud voice, that it brought out Mr. Paul, the landlord, and a friend, who were discussing a jug of spiced ale in the best parlour. The friend proved to be Walker, the lieutenant's *factotum*.

"Why, hallo! Sampy, come in," said Mr. Paul, "come in, gentlemen; here's a good fire here. Loar, Jimmeny! whatever have 'ee got heer?—stuff for the new mine—eh? The roads are slottery."

In tumbled the men, led by Sampy.

"How's young Mister Tolpedden?" said Sampy. "The Lord was very good in presarving hem. His lot fell on stony ground; but he's a brave lad, and I owe him thanks for the day I fell among the Phelestines at St. Tudy's. Have they brought hem hum from St. Anne's Church town? Oh! dear, dear! Well, that was an accident, and he shut en, too, bravely in the head, wasn't ut?"

"Here's a gentleman as knows more about it than I do," said the landlord presenting Walker, as if he was a candidate for election.

"He was 'nation bad," said Walker modestly, and plunging his hands in his waistcoat pockets, "when they brought him home first, and squire and my master were half mad about it; but when Mr. Bradbrain came to look he only found his left shoulder put out, and a deep cut in his temple; he's getting round now nicely, thankee; he'll soon be on deck again."

"Well, well," said Sampy, "I am glad of that,

for he was a ruddy lad, and of a fair countenance, and simly to me, like David, when he went out against Goliath. Might I ask the favour, Mr. Paul, of a little crumb of cheese for me and my mates?"

The bread and cheese brought, with some rum and a smoking jug of hot water, the men drew closer to the fire.

"So this is a good strong lode, and no horse in it, eh?" said the landlord, incredulously, and with a smile at Walker. "I should like to see the gossan. I've lived long enough to hear of a good many lodes before this one, but there was always a cross course, or heave, or some traade, to suck up the shareholders' money, and so the thing tails off. It's an odd thing to me you men with the divining rods don't find something good for yourself. It's very good of them, isn't it, Mr. Walker, as they makes other people rich and yet remains poor themselves—very self-denying, ain't it? What I want to see is a Devon Great Consols again, with a three mile lode. There's some go in that, eh, Mr. Walker?"

"They do say," said Walker, sullenly, "that it wasn't all above-board about the purchase—that some land-shark got information about the copper, and set old Mordred to buy it for the Corporation, and then turn it over to himself. If so, I say he's one of those pirates that hoist Bible and Crown till they have the grappling irons fixed, and then up goes the jolly Roger, with the skull and cross-bones."

"There's men," said Sampy, "who go about night and day sowing tares, which is evil reports; they're like the foxes with fire-brands which Sampson sent among the standing corn. They're no good—they'll be cast out, they will. They're going the wrong road, and they never won't find the right. They're down the wrong shaft, and they cast up only mire and dirt, like troubled water!"

"Why, they played that trick, you know," said the landlord, "to Mr. Vivian, at the Ding Dong, and it was done also, you know, at the Wheal Betsy?"

"Done here or done there—larboard tack or starboard tack—it's cheating," said Walker, angrily, "and next door to thieving. The man who'd do that would rob his own father; and if I could lay my hands on him——"

"Augh! skid the wheel!" cried one of the drivers, who had long been chafing at the bantering tone of the landlord and his friend, feeling his dignity hurt, and the reputation of the new mine assailed. "There's no cheating in our mine," he said, beating his glass on the table till the rum and water splashed over, "and I'm ready to fight for it if any one wants to make a por about it—come!"

"Set down," said Sampy, but the man was unappeasable.

"I won't hear them words," he said. "He's the worse for lying that says the Great Wheal Fortune won't hold up her head with Cook's Kitchen, Polberro, or any of them. If it wasn't so, don't 'ee see, I wouldn't lift a gad, or waste powder in it, for I

was brought up at the Bottalac, and I know tin as well as any man from here to the Mount. If I don't know a lode, captain, what did you take me on tribute for?"

Titus Teague was a good specimen of the narrow-minded partisan—his soul in arms, and eager for the fray! He had been drinking on the road, and was decidedly quarrelsome.

Walker said nothing, but poked the fire.

"The lode has made a shift," said Titus, maliciously. "Where's the man now as dare say the Wheal Fortune's a plant, and our promoter on'y digging a hole to catch Tim Doodle's money?"

The man was a bully, and thought he had intimidated the irascible Walker.

"It's a blessed thing for brethren to dwell together in unity!" said Sampy. "Take another glass of rum, Tity?"

"Somebody's been and rubbed Tity's hair wrong way!" said Zacky, another of the men; at which all the rest laughed, and even Sampy joined in his rueful manner.

"It's better to say nothing agin the Wheal Fortune when Titus cuts up rough," said another of Tity's friends, with a glance of contempt at Walker.

This fired Walker, and up he leaped with clenched fists.

"Looke here," he said, going up to Titus, who turned blood red, pushed back his chair, and began to gird up his loins too, "I say the whole affair is

a d— cheat, and that old Mordred swindled my master's brother out of it somehow or other ; and if he wasn't a rogue he'd give it back ; no, I don't care a brass-pin for you, or any of your gang ; a word more, and I'll drop you on the planching."

Up dashed all the miners like madmen ; down tumbled the chairs.

"Hit hem!" "Footch un through the durnes" (doors). "Knock his head off." "Give it him from the shoulder," they roared.

Down went the table, the jug, and all the tumblers, in a tremendous crash, as the two combatants grappled, after several blows as if from steam-hammers.

"Chrestion brethren, no fitun," cried Sampy, at a prudent distance from the combatants.

"Police ! police !" cried the landlord, tearing at the bell to summon the waiter. "They'll break everything. There's seven shillings gone already ! Police ! police !"

In less than five minutes, Walker, after inflicting considerable injury, and many contusions on Titus Teague, the doughty champion of the Great Wheal Fortune, was beaten, and jostled into the road, overpowered by numbers.

"Now," said Titus, waving his ensanguined fists, "zackly so, who'll stand up now and say the Wheal Fortune's a plant. Thack man mistook his comraads, Captain Sandoe, didn't he, eh?"

"Hallelooliah !" intoned Sampy.

There was no other reply to Titus than that

which Mr. Dymock obtained when he rode in and challenged traitors, recusant Frenchmen, and Jacobites, at the Queen's coronation; so the landlord groaned, took a comforting nip of sherry and bitters, and drank success to the Great Wheal Fortune.

CHAPTER XVI.

M R . G R E A T H E A R T .

A FORTNIGHT after the accident Arthur was all but recovered. Though not able to walk far, he could ride out a short distance for exercise, and could paint, and read as usual, though still too weak to carry his gun, or to venture up to Oxford for his matriculation.

So much better was he on the Wednesday week, that the Tregellases had consented, at Mr. Tolpedden's request, to let their children join the lieutenant's family on that day, to celebrate Bobby's birthday.

The lieutenant, about eleven o'clock, an hour before the children had arrived, might have been found taking his morning promenade down the whole front of his three ground-floor rooms, and making observations from the window at any "craft" in the offing; in other words, watching any passing cart or pedestrian, while he gave orders to Walker

about any planting or pruning that the garden that day needed.

Mr. Tolpedden, over whom hung a deep gloom, the causes of which none of his family could explain, was hard at work in his study ; while Arthur was busy copying a family portrait, supposed to be by Van Loo, for a sketch of which Lucy Tregellas had expressed a wish.

Presently the Tregellas children arrived, full of inquiries for Arthur from their father and mother, who, indeed, had never allowed a day to pass since the accident without sending over to inquire.

The children were soon in full force out in the paddock, under escort of little Susan and Kitty, good old Liddy being Generalissimo. Their amusements consisted in taking rides by turns on Nettle, the little New Forest pony that Arthur had purchased at St. Tudy's Fair. But even wrangling for turns, pulling horse hairs out of Nettle's tail, falling off, and trotting grow monotonous ; still Arthur's appearance gave these pleasures a fresh relish, for he took the children one by one before him on the saddle, and galloped them between the paddock and the orchard.

Jack, sturdy, and rather fond of power, was a sort of colonel of the quieter children. Ned he ordered to and fro as his aide-de-camp. Kate obeyed the young despot under protest, Herbert and Leonard yielded to him rather from shyness than from goodwill, Clara and Bertha did as Kate did, because she was their hostess, and because they

were allowed to carry about Billy, the lieutenant's pet terrier, and hug him till he was delightfully miserable, and this made them forget all Jack's abuses of power.

While Kitty and Susan, very neat in their lilac prints, wore exchanging confidences, and discussing the marked attentions shown by Thomas, Mr. Tolpeddén's handsome coachman, to Fanny, the buxom housemaid, old Liddy was superintending the riding with anxiety and delight, not unmixed with terror. She looked so comely and respectable in her large frilled, old-fashioned white cap, and grey ribbons, her clean white apron, and snuff-coloured, almost quakerly dress. So fond of children, and so devoted to her duties, that the incessant vexations and anxieties that would have been intolerable to a mere hireling, were to that good old body a labour of love, she was so single-hearted and faithful, that she had no greater pleasure than serving the family. All thoughts of self, or an independent home, had long since passed from her mind. When she wasn't watching the children, or directing the under-servants, she was darning; and when not darning, she was preserving.

Every moment she uttered a faint scream, or an exclamation of warning, as some urchin rolled off laughing, or shrieked as Arthur jolted them into a faster trot. Master Jack, showing off before the visitors, was less obedient than usual.

“Master John, don’t tease Master Ned.—Oh! Mr. Arthur, pray don’t go so fast!—Miss Clara, hold fast, or you’ll be off.—Oh! pray don’t let Miss Bobby drop!—Master Herbert, don’t go so near Nettle’s legs.—Miss Bertha, don’t let Billy bite that beautiful new frock.”

How the children enjoyed those scampering gallops over the dead leaves, and the races round the grey-mossed apple trees, and how, when their scarfs and ribbons fluttered out, they laughed and frolicked, happy as angels; while Billy, his hair all in a fuz with the wind, barked and scampered after them; his brown eyes laughing, as he ran and shared the fun.

How, too (fickle as all mobs are), they left Arthur and Nettle, when Mrs. Tolpedden came tripping down the garden towards them, and took and tossed Bobby in her arms, while they surrounded her and pulled at her gown, and clapped their hands, and a moment after were all intent—the boys at leap-frog, and the girls at hide-and-seek—Liddy being arbitrator for them all.

“Why, Arthur, you look quite yourself this morning,” said Mrs. Tolpedden, tangling her hand in her fondling innocent way in Nettle’s mane as Arthur drew him up by her side. You’ll soon be well now, Mr. Bradbrain says.”

“Well, my dear aunt, I do think I am nearly right again; it was a nasty spill, but we pulled through, thank God. Now, I want you to put on your bonnet, and let me drive you to St. Petrock’s

to fetch Miss Tregellas. The children brought word that she would be ready by half-past twelve, and we can get back for luncheon."

"I shall enjoy a drive, Arthur; and we'll take Bobby. I must run now and tell Nel I'm going. But what does Fanny want?"

Fanny, with a letter in her hand, came racing down the plantation that joined the two premises.

"A letter for you, sir, from Mr. Mordred."

"Mr. Mordred?" said Arthur, with surprise; "why, what the dickens does that brute of a fellow want with me?"

He tore open the letter spitefully, and read aloud,

"DEAR MR. TOLPEDDEN,

"Unjustly as I have been treated by your father, and proud and unchristian as his conduct has always been to me, even before our last most unpleasant interview, I cannot help writing, in justice to my partner, to assure you that he has not in any way participated in those business arrangements that I have been compelled to make, and which, so unexpectedly to myself, have led to profit. I, and I alone, have been the motive power in the speculations that a kind and overruling Providence has so graciously permitted to become successful. I write this without Mr. Bradbrain's knowledge; in mere justice to a very clever and well-meaning young man, and for fear

that he might suffer from the prejudice so unjustly heaped by your family upon

“Yours ever faithfully,

“SAMUEL MORDRED.

“Arthur Tolpedden, Esq.”

When Arthur had torn the hypocritical letter into bits, and tossed them down the wind, he looked up, and when he had looked up, to his surprise, bright tears of excitement had risen into his aunt's eyes.

“No,” she said, “I will never believe that Mr. Bradbrain has participated in any deceptions practised against us, even if there have been any.”

“Well, I do think myself there has been cheating somewhere,” said Arthur, surprised for a moment at his aunt's eagerness to vindicate the young doctor.

While Mrs. Tolpedden ran to get ready for the drive, order dinner, and see if her husband would accompany them, Arthur strolled to the lawn, where Liddy was seated at the foot of a beech-tree. The old family nurse had all the children round her, and was telling them how she had been present when the Prince Regent first came to Brighton, where Jack's grandfather was then staying. From Liddy's point of view the whole ceremonial revolved round Mr. Tolpedden. In her simple and religious mind, the sight had been one of the most gorgeous ever witnessed by human eyes. After “Heaven” came “the family” in her creed, and

religion and love for her master both entered into her feelings in connection with this great epoch of her life. The only two personages whose outlines were at all clear in the story were the king and "master."

"There," she went on, "was the king, my dears, and your grandfather, Miss Kate, and Lord Yarmouth—he had red whiskers, I remember; and Mr. Brummel, such a fine gentleman!"

"What did grandpapa do?" said irrepressible Jack, but was silenced by universal consent.

"And then all the volunteers marched past the king, and your grandpapa and they reminded me of the children of Israel going out to battle; and as for the people, they were so thick, my dears, that you might really have walked on their heads for whole streets together, Master Ned, and it reminded me for all the world of the day of judgment, for I don't think there were ever so many souls collected before in one place; and there were generals, bishops, soldiers, and brass bands, and everything grand and splendid; and the king and your grandfather, Master John, were in the very middle of it all, and it brought the tears into my eyes, it did, to see them, as I thought, where will half these people be twenty years hence? And then I swooned away with the heat, for I was but a girl then, and they took me home, and I remember they brought me to with cherry-brandy—by the same token they spoiled a new silver grey gown with it, and it was never worth five farthings

(don't tease, Miss Bobby, Master John), after that ; and that's all my story. And now we'll go down to the house, and have some cake, and be good children, and quiet, because your uncle, Master John, is busy with his books."

And after the cake, Mrs. Tolpedden being delayed by some breakage of crockery by Susan, who was rather awkward in handling fragile things, and by some intricate negotiations with the itinerant country butcher, Arthur volunteered to amuse the children by putting on an old family suit of armour that hung in the hall.

It was a fine steel suit, and as it had been originally made for a young man, it fitted the young squire like a glove. He took care to go and put it on in a distant room, so that the children could not see him till the transformation was fully effected, for this increased the enchantment. He was good-natured enough, too, to take some pains in dressing—to stick a long wavy red feather in the steel cap, to tie over his left shoulder one of Mrs. Tolpedden's crimson scarfs, to sling on an old sword, to don his long hunting-boots, and finally, to crown all, to paint with Indian ink a huge Don Quixote moustachio, that curled, in the braggadocio Spanish manner, almost up to his eyes, and gave a dash of caricature to the whole costume.

How the children shouted and danced with delight when he strode into the parlour, where they were waiting for him with intense expectation ! John screamed with laughter, Bertha, Clara, and

Kate clapped their hands, and cried "Beautiful!" Leonard and Herbert joined the clamour, while Bobby helped with inarticulate applause and by ecstatic kicking in Susan's arms.

The children had been reading "The Pilgrim's Progress," and their fancy ran just then entirely on the quaint allegories of Liddy's favourite book.

"Let us act the Interpreter's house," said Jack, "Uncle Arthur shall be Greatheart, and Liddy must be Christiana."

It was always *must* with Johnny.

"Yes, yes!" cried all the rest.

"And I'll be Mercy," said Kate.

"No, I'll be Mercy," said Clara.

"Little ladies mustn't quarrel," said Liddy, majestically.

"I'll be the man with the rake," said Herbert, setting to work in that minor character.

"And I'm the butcher killing the sheep," said Jack, seizing a footstool in order to properly sustain his character.

"And Liddy must be the Interpreter, and call for me," said Arthur.

And so Liddy, well up in her part, for she knew the book almost by heart, called for her man Greatheart, bade him take sword, and helmet, and shield, and conduct her daughters to the house called Beautiful, where they should rest next.

Then Arthur, assuming enormous importance, led them all in restless procession, singing from the book those quaint lines :

"This place hath been our second stage," &c.

"Now for the fight with the lions, Arthur; kill Mr. Grim—Bloody-man," shouted Jack, who had appointed himself prompter-general.

"Mr. Greatheart is a strong man, and is not afraid of a lion," read Liddy.

Then all the children pretended to cower back as Arthur put on a gruff giant's voice, and cried:

"This is not their way, neither shall they go therein. I am come to back the lions."

Then Arthur pushed the children back, drew his sword, and cried:

"It is the king's highway that we are in, and these women and children *shall* hold on their way."

And then he fell to and slashed and cut and stabbed, and beat his breast-plate, till, first with a downright blow, he pretended to bring Grim on his knee, then broke his helmet, lastly cut off his arm, and left him for dead on the spot.

And having thus settled Mr. Bloody-Man, he kissed the children all round, tossed Jack into the air, caught him, and finally ran off with Bobby on his shoulder, chased by all the children, who screamed and laughed till the old house rang again.

Garrick himself never had such an ovation ; but then Garrick's audience was perhaps more critical.

Just as they all darted out upon the lawn, the lieutenant and his wife came up arm-in-arm.

"Why, Arthur," he said, "what on earth are you dressing up in that Tom-fool tin saucepan

stuff for? You're tiring yourself. If you don't obey the doctor I shall have to put you in irons."

"I'm sure it's very good of Arthur taking so much trouble to please the children," said his aunt.

"And, oh! they *have* been pleased, ma'am!" said Liddy. "Haven't you, children?"

The ayes had it, and the vote of thanks was carried *nem con.*

"If you please, marm, the carriage is ready," said Susan, at that moment.

"I'll be ready in a jiffy," said Arthur, as he ran off.

"I do believe, Polly," said the lieutenant, "that Arthur is a little in love with Lucy Tregellas."

"A little! a great deal, you silly dear," replied his wife, laughing, and tapping his frosty red cheek with her hand; "of course, and pray how did you find out that?"

"Never you mind, Polly; but come and carry Bobby a bit—you haven't taken so much notice of her lately. Oh! you may pout, but you haven't."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GREAT WHEAL FORTUNE.

THE morning papers abounded with favourable notices of the new mine. Lord Rostrevor's name was down for fifty shares; doctors, lawyers, clergymen, farmers, shop-keepers, were all eager

for shares in so promising a concern. Already a good deal of valuable copper ore had been raised, it was reported, from the ends of the old workings. The whole county began to be alive to the fact of a new and vigorous enterprise having been started, backed by the wealthy banker of St. Petrock's, and half the gentry of North Cornwall.

Mr. Tregellas had refused to take any shares, but the Wavertons had risked some hundreds. Miss Trevena, too, was unceasing in her efforts to tease and worry her unpractical brother to induce him to make his fortune.

Hitherto Mr. Trevena had been obdurate.

One morning his sister returned from a business visit to Messrs. Fox and Shakell, Mr. Mordred's lawyers, and instantly charged into the study where her brother was sitting reading.

"What! back already?" said the amiable man, looking up with dishevelled hair from an old folio; "it's not dinner-time yet, is it, Fanny?—I'm getting my work done now, because I want to go and call on the Wavertons after dinner."

"I should not go near that man," said Atropos, sitting down, and pulling off her black kid gloves in a severe way; "he's going to Rome as fast as he can, every one but you sees it. There isn't one of the lot I'd give a fig for but Milly, and she's a poor silly little foolish thing, without two ideas.

"My dear! my dear!" said Trevena, groaning, "don't be so prejudiced—you're too hard in your

judgments—we've all faults. And what did Fox and Shakell say?"

"Say?—why they talked of the Great Wheal Fortune of course, and wondered why you didn't buy some shares."

" My dear Fanny, how often I've told you before that I don't like to see clergymen mining; there's too much gambling in it, it is unhealthy for the men, it keeps the children from school, and the women from home—there, there, I don't like it, Fanny—that ought to be enough; and, besides, it wouldn't be decent in us to go and take shares in a mine that some people say those worthy people the Tolpeddens were cheated out of—I tell you, mining is all uncertainty and guess."

"There are your scruples again, John—you seem determined never to be rich—always to live in this miserable muddle and hugger-mugger."

"But, my dear creature——"

"Stuff and nonsense with your dear creatures, when you won't move a foot to raise me and yourself; you offend the bishops, and do all you can to ruin yourself, and expose us to poverty and mortifications. Everyone is buying shares—there's the Morrisons of St. Advent—there's—"

“But there’s our church to restore.”

Trevena's mild nature began to waver before this fierce onslaught of indignant selfishness. "Nagging" would wear away iron, much more a man's weak resolution.

The assailant saw that the wall was crumbling, and she redoubled her fire.

"Well, and couldn't that wait?—where's the hurry?—who wants it done?—hasn't it done very well for years? Other people let churches wait—other people don't worry themselves with scruples. Pray, John, do consider your own interests more—if you don't take care of yourself, who is to do it, I should like to know? Your friends, the Wavertons, they didn't lose time in getting shares; and if we made money, you know, the church could soon be done."

This was artful of Miss Fanny Trevena. The last fort was all but taken; Mr. Trevena visibly wavered, for he turned his head on one side, he put on his considering cap, he looked very hard at a large red coal that was spitting out at intervals violent puffs of gas.

"There is something in that," he said slowly, letting the words drop reluctantly, one by one weighing them; parting from them, in fact, as a miser parts from money that he is obliged to pay.

"Of course there is," said the female tempter, more subtly still, and more conciliatingly, as if paying respect to the admission; "of course there is, John"—(the John came out so tenderly)—"and if the Boscowens or Lord Rostrevor couldn't help, we could then do the best part of it ourselves, and raise the rest by shilling cards—you remember, dear, what a turn the Prices got in that way."

"They certainly did."

Poor amiable man, his resistance was melting as a snow-man does in a thaw.

"It is our duty, you know, to get the means of being independent, and doing more good—we are bound hand and foot with our paltry two hundred a year. Why, Lord Rostrevor gives his French cook as much as that."

"Don't say those sort of things, my dear, it pains me to hear you say things that even seem worldly—why should we envy any one?"

"Envy a cook, indeed!—no, I don't; but I do say, John, that the bishops ought to be ashamed of themselves, and I have often heard you say so. But only think if we had £200 a year more; why, you could publish your volume of sermons, and I could dress a little more becoming my station."

"Yes, I see all that; but is the speculation thoroughly safe?"

"Safe!" Miss Trevena gave a little sour, sarcastic laugh; "why, the copper is coming up in cartloads. Messrs. Fox and Shakell tell me there isn't such a mine this side Truro, except the Great Devon Consols, and the gossan here resembles that."

"I hardly know even what gossan is, but it does certainly seem favourable. But ain't Fox and Shakell interested in puffing it?"

"Interested! Why, they've gone and taken a hundred shares, and you know what cautious people they are. John, if we don't get shares this week, we never shall, for there won't be any to have."

"I really don't know *what* to do," said Trevena, in a desponding voice, burying his head in his hands, and tumbling his hair as he planted his two elbows on the table; "it is hardly right towards the Tolpeddens."

"Fiddlestick about the Tolpeddens! What do they do for us? What would they do in our place?"

"Well, I suppose you'll have your own way after all, and I'd better surrender at discretion. Lay out one hundred pounds for each of us, and may Heaven bless the undertaking, if it deserves blessing; but mind, mind it wasn't my wish."

"I take the whole responsibility on myself," said Miss Trevena, rising, and re-tying her bonnet-strings sharply, as she rung the bell violently. "If you would only take my advice oftener, John, you would soon be in a very different position."

In peered Emily's sable face.

"Emily, run and tell Jackson to put the horse in the pony-carriage again directly. I am obliged to go to Boscastle immediately on important business."

Ten minutes later Miss Trevena, stern as Jezebel, was urging on her large Newfoundland dog of a pony on the hard grey seaward road leading to Boscastle.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SECRET IS TOLD AT LAST.

M R. TOLPEDDEN was a great enthusiast, but still he never lost his way in his Dream-land.

Amid all the dark labyrinthine paradoxes of Paracelsus and Van Helmont, purposely translated into an almost undecipherable shorthand of allegory, and, not to speak profanely, esoteric jargon, sometimes rising into the most fantastic gibberish, he steadily pursued his way, seeking only for truth, and carrying in his hand the bright lamp of modern science.

His was no vain or extravagant ambition. In spite of all the encouragement his chief German correspondent, that great chemist Liebig, gave him, he never expected to be able to make gold or diamonds. His one common-sense aim was to re-discover some of those metals and compounds that he was certain his predecessor, Basil Valentine, &c., had discovered, and either neglected as mere toys, or thrown behind him as mere encumbrances to men in search of a great object. Many of the gases, phosphorus, alcohol, the use of mineral medicines, half the tinctures and solutions of modern doctors, were all, as he well knew, the discoveries of the now too despised alchemists. He looked upon these fanatics as shrewd

indefatigable, self-denying workers, and the most daring and original experimenters the world had almost ever known. They were severe testers and searchers of nature, following the Baconian theory a century before Bacon was born. They admitted of no finality in the science of chemistry. They put nature to the rack, and compelled her to disclose her secrets. They burned and crushed her till she uttered prophetic oracles. Their aims were sometimes low, but the best men among them felt the true aspirations of genius.

Mr. Tolpedden searched the old folios of the alchemists, as the Cornish miners search the workings of "the old men," as they call the Romans, to press them further for the treasure that ancient skill or ancient patience failed to reach.

Once among his crucibles, retorts, and alembics, once by the orange glare of his furnace, or busy with his microscopes, that gave him an almost spiritual power in the analysis of matter, he could forget his troubles, and pursue his eager chase of that Protean truth that had so long baffled him. Now and then only a pang shot through his heart when he thought of Arthur, and the impossibility of sending him to college, for another year at least. He had not yet had the moral courage to tell either him or the worthy lieutenant of his loss. He would have spared himself no pain, but he dreaded the moment when he must crush his son's happiness—for a time, at least—at a blow. He had also hoped, till that very moment, to borrow

from his solicitors a sum sufficiently large to enable him still to carry out at once his scheme of a university education for Arthur.

We are nearly all, even the best of us, gamblers in our hearts. The best Christian among us, though he knows the universe spins on according to fixed and unalterable laws, yet in moments of danger hopes for some lucky and exceptional accident. Who, in moments of trouble, has not listened with beating heart for the knock at the door, the avatar of the man who is to set everything right—pay the debt, remove the difficulty, buy the picture, or exorcise the man in possession?

It was with such superstitious hope and fear that Mr. Tolpedden had, ever since the fatal letter about the bank arrived, plunged deeper and deeper into the weedy labyrinths of alchemy, in hopes of bringing up some matchless pearl of a secret from the dark and muddy sea in which so much wisdom lies embedded, thick as treasure-vessels in the Goodwin Sands.

In what agonizing endeavours did he not waste the midnights, chasing through gases and flames, and all the elementary transmutations, the Protean truth that still avoided him. His hand seemed all but to grasp the key; his foot all but to enter the inner sanctuary; but still the darkness lay beyond, and the voice that spake to him out of that darkness refused to take any material form that chemic art could imprison, fuse, melt, or petrify. One link still was wanting; till that could be found

the discovery was but a cloud—a golden, but still a transitory cloud.

Never was a father's mental suffering so pure and unselfish as that—never did an unrecorded martyr suffer at a fiercer flame of sorrow. They were not the self-lit fires of hurt pride that tortured him in his solitude. No ; what he felt was the anguish of a father who sees his son torn from him by a ruthless conscription—torn from honest ambitions and a nobler career.

For two days past Arthur had been busy packing for Oxford ; that morning his labours had culminated. There was such racing up and down stairs to collect books, and "small traps," as the lieutenant called them, to oil and put away guns, quoits, cricket-bats, pistols, and fishing-rods, whips, easels, and paint-boxes. With all a boy's activity and animal spirits, Arthur joined the restless energy of his race. He had almost entirely got over his accident, and the excitement of leaving home had roused him to a fever of joyous bustle, that tired no one, but gave life to the whole house.

What should and what should not go was discussed with all the fickleness not unbecoming in a high-spirited youth on first leaving home. Patent bootjacks and worked slippers were tossed in on dress-shirts ; exercise-books, white waistcoats, new gloves, and dressing-gowns. Liddy was almost distracted at the conflicting orders.

The portmanteau already was like a pie that

still: has been rummaged for tit-bits ; and still every moment in went Lexicons, handkerchiefs, Greek plays, and other miscellaneous trifles, to help the confusion.

“ Gracious goodness, Mister Arthur,” said Liddy, “ pray give me the things in a little more order. You’re spoilin’ all your shirt fronts ; and as for your collars, they’ll be so crumpled they won’t be fit to be seen, they won’t, indeed. Now doee have patience.”

“ Well, but, Liddy, these must go in,” said Arthur, as he poured down four volumes of Tennyson, a Gradus, and a Grote’s History of Greece. “ Stuff them in anywhere. You’re packing as if I was going to India.”

“ But they can’t.”

“ Yes, but they must.”

“ Hallo ! there, skulkers in the main-top !” shouted the lieutenant up the stairs at that moment.

“ Arthur, we’re going to the plantation,” cried his father, “ to see how the men are getting on with felling ; and we want you to stroll with us. The children are not to come, your uncle says.”

“ Now, Liddy, if you don’t get in all those books, I’ll kill you,” said Arthur, as he raced downstairs, and joined the walking party.

The lieutenant, like most idle men, was a great inventor of small business. He was always either making or filling up flower-beds, putting up rain guages, constructing gates, or altering hedges.

His present improvement was clearing a small riding in the plantation, between his own and his brother's house.

There was a belt of firs, drawn up like lancers, on a rising ground beyond Mr. Henry Tolpedden's orchard, and the new riding was to improve the rabbit-shooting there. Walker was foreman, and he had two wood-cutters under him. The new path, they agreed, would give an excellent opportunity for quick shots, as the rabbits flashed across before Arthur's beagles.

It was a cold, clear November day, and the wind whistled among the brown rustling beech leaves, that still clung faithfully to the bleak smooth branches, and would cling till the sharp buds should open, and the pleated green leaves open out their fans. The purple brambles, too, still held their own, and battled with adversity in their rough sturdy way; but the ferns were rusted red, the larches had withered, the chestnuts were under bare poles, and in shady places the last night's frost was still white and powdery upon them all. The rabbits cowered in their warm burrows, and wondered what was going on overhead. The hare, cowering out on the distant fallows, heard the axes ring and wondered.

There were the men, hard at work, blow on blow, alternate, and the old firs nodded to their fall. Close by the three men, the woodcutter's children had lit a fire with resinous chips, and were roasting pig-nuts in the hot grey ashes. Far

away a large red-headed woodpecker, undaunted by the disturbance, uttered his strange cry, not unlike the yelp of a puppy.

A pleasant turpentine smell arose, as Arthur fell to with one of the axes and sent the white chips flying from the deep gash Walker and his men had already made in the biggest of the doomed trees.

It pleased the lieutenant to suppose a storm, and Arthur cutting down a disabled mast.

"Cheerily, my hearties—with a will, bosun!" he cried, with his boisterous voice; "to the board with her, we must clear off the top hamper with the boarding-axes—now she goes!"

"Take care the butt doesn't start, sir," said Walker, as down, slowly, stately, and then quicker, with a crash, came the Scotch fir, its boughs splintering and rending as they reached the ground.

"Never was a better cut," said one of the men.

Arthur stooped down, and looked at the rings, that showed the symmetrical growth of layer after layer. The grossest flattery is, after all, not altogether insupportable. As Arthur leaned on his axe, he looked like a young Norseman felling timber with which to build galleys. Then he flew at another tree that had been marked by a notch, and off sprang the bark and wedges of the wood.

"Arthur," said his father, who had scarcely spoken a word since they left the house, "come to

the fire out there, I've something rather particular to tell you; and, Nelson, I want you also to hear it."

Talk of appropriate keys in music, who can pitch a tune with such exquisite instinct as the heart can, when it wishes to express love, hope, hatred, or fear? There was pathos in the tone with which Mr. Tolpedden spoke—a foreboding of impending evil, blended with no little regret at having to communicate the news of such a calamity. Arthur did not, of course, read all this in the few simple words we have given; but still some foreshadowing of such evil came over him, as if a sudden cloud had dimmed the sun above his head.

The lieutenant, always sturdy, unsuspecting, and never very elastic or nimble in mind, took in merely this simple fact, that his brother, who had for several days seemed rather out of spirits, had now something, probably unpleasant, the cause of his low spirits, to tell. He felt, he afterwards used to say, as he had done when the vessel he was on board refused to answer her helm, on a certain occasion, off the Cape. Arthur, sanguine, full of courage, and unaccustomed to misfortune, was roused by curiosity rather than fear. The older man shuddered, because he remembered misfortunes that had come fierce and sudden as white squalls, and yet had proved dangerous and cruel as the "Tiger Wind" of the Chinese seas, sweeping all by the board, and leaving his life a mere wreck upon the waters.

When they reached the wood fire, the children

had left it, to go and pick up dry fir cones for their mother, who was collecting a bundle of twigs at the further end of the plantation.

The three stood round the fire—the face of the one was worn and anxious; the other two faces were full of an alarmed curiosity.

“I thought I would come here,” said Mr. Tolpedden, “because we should be away from the children, and the servants could not even by accident overhear us.”

“My dear father, I never saw you low before. What is it that has vexed you so?—Some attack on you, I suppose, for your proposals for a Radical reform in chemistry? You don’t mean, do you, that that beast of a head-keeper at Rostrevor has been poisoning one of the dogs? It isn’t Billy?—is it, pater?”

A sickly, unwilling smile spread over Mr. Tolpedden’s mouth, but his eyes were lustreless and sad as before.

“Worse than that, Arthur, much worse” (here he threw a dead fir-branch on the ashes, and it crackled up instantly into a yellow flame.) “The—the—well, I suppose I must cut with it, though it is like cutting off my right arm. Our bank has failed, and I’ve lost five-and-twenty thousand pounds, thanks to the detestable commercial dishonesty of our times. From the wreck we may pick out a few hundreds, but that is all. I was a great coward, Arthur, a detestable coward, not to have told you sooner, but it was only this morning

I had a letter from Chetwynd, Strong, and Wrack-em, declining to advance me further money till the affair was wound up."

"Our bank broken?" exclaimed Arthur.

"Good God, Harry!" exclaimed the lieutenant, plunging both hands into his pockets, and looking to windward. "I declare I feel as I did the first day I went to sea. My head goes round. What'll Polly say?"

"Everything seems against us," continued Mr. Henry Tolpedden; "and now this scoundrel of a Mordred has, by some low trick or other, contrived to cheat us out of 'No Man's Land,' and directly he buys it he sets to work on this mine they talk of, which will, I hear, pay back the purchase-money in the first two months."

Arthur clutched at a fir-branch that lay near him, and seized it as if it was a deadly weapon, his brows, too, contracted.

"I'll go this very day and thrash that rascal," he said, "to pay him out for his contemptible cheating. He shall never go about boasting what fools he made of the Tolpeddens."

"Belay there!—belay there! Arthur," said the lieutenant, taking the bough from him as if he was taking a loaded pistol from a child's hand; "gently does it. Always give a shark a wide berth, I say; there is nothing to be got from sharks but bites. They're no good dead or alive. At all events, Harry, when you've drawn your money out of his

bank, you cut the tow-rope, and have done with the rascal."

"That's one comfort—it's an ill wind that blows no good!" said Arthur.

His father sighed, a sigh that seemed to tear up his heart by the roots.

"Worse luck, Arthur," he said; "I had nothing in that bank. I had overdrawn; the money the fellow paid me for the cliff field nearly all goes to repay what he had advanced. Since my father wasted half his estate on that accursed shaft at Endellion, misfortunes have never come upon us in such a pitiless storm."

"But it is only taking in sail a bit, after all," said the lieutenant, scraping out his pipe with his penknife. "It is only living quiet for a year or two; no parties, a horse less—you had more than you wanted before. It is the purser's business to cut down expenses, and make all square. The log must be kept, weekly observations taken, and we'll soon get you into smooth water again."

"What do I care for a hunter or so? Turn off Thomas, and let the home farm," said Arthur.

"It is not for myself, Arthur, that I care, my wants are few, it is for you; but I shall make shift—I'll sell the barouche, and I'll sell the farm out at Trebarwith; I'll turn off Lizzy, and keep only Fanny and Liddy. We'll employ Walker between us, Nel, for both gardens, and Arthur must be as economical as he can at Baliol, and try hard for a fellowship. If he gets a double first—and

he can, Tregellas tells me, if he chooses—a fig for the mine, the bank, and all our losses! Come, Nel, come and look over last year's accounts, and consult with me where I can curtail. Arthur, if you're going to wish the Tregellases good-bye, you'd better go and lunch there, for they expect you. After all, bad as the news is, my dear boy, it might have been worse. Good-bye."

Arthur made no reply, but instead of taking the path through the nut-walk that led to the stables, he struck across the end of the plantation, and leaping a low stone wall, made his way to a common, rough with furze-bushes, and strewn with granite-blocks. From a slope there he could see all the valley leading to St. Petrock's.

The white morning mist had long ago lifted, the distant hill-side farms were showing sharp and clear in outline, though each so small that it might have been balanced like a child's Noah's ark upon a giant's hand. There, too, was the little square grey tower of St. Tudy's, far away on the grey hill to the left. Below, through the ravine, darkened by hazel-trees and copse, flowed the brook that joined the sea at Boscastle. On an ash-tree near, a bird sang, anticipating the far-distant spring. From the opposite hill-side farm there came the clamour of children, to whom noise is sacred, because it is an emblem of future liberty. Walls of black houses, and miles of stony terraces, emprison, and seem sometimes to contract the mind. How often does a wide, free,

open country lend the imagination wings, till there seems to open before it through the azure distance new and undiscovered worlds.

But Arthur was in no mood for calm, poetical contemplation. His brain was in a ferment. There was a weight at his heart.

Even love, pure and unselfish as his love for Lucy Tregellas was, was not at that moment ruling all his thoughts. Duty had stepped in and for the time expelled that Siren Seraph—an heroic resolve was urging him to action. One of those great struggles of temptation, which every man in his life has to undergo, was now raging within him. Must he then surrender all hopes of fame—all those social advantages that since a child he had been led to expect? Must he proclaim himself to the Tregellases, and all his friends, as a poor adventurer, who had only his brains on which to depend for his precarious bread.

For a moment the selfish voice of his evil genius whispered, "No; do as your father wishes." Then purer impulses came and chased swiftly away, with swords of flame and light, those baser and evil promptings. The blood throbbed warmer in his heart, it pulsed forth again in a fuller and more generous tide—then sprang forth holy tears of joy, such as those which a young mother sheds as she watches her first child's first sleep.

Then in that wild and lonely place, beside the furze covert, he knelt to make his vow, and raising his clasped hands to the blue sky, he implored

God's blessing, in simple and earnest words, on the self-sacrifice so bravely made, and so bravely to be carried out.

* * * * *

When Arthur returned to the house, while Thomas was saddling Gipsy, he met Liddy crying in the passage; and at the same moment, passing the open kitchen door, he saw Fanny resting her head on the dresser, and sobbing as if her heart would break.

"Oh! dear, dear, Mister Arthur," groaned Liddy. "Oh! that ever I should have lived to hear what I have heard this day! It'll break your father's heart, your going to Oxford to-morrow."

"Liddy," said Arthur, "where's my father?"

"He's in the study. Mr. Nelson's just gone home. I know I saw the tears in his eyes. Thomas is to have warning to-night. Oh, dear!—oh, dear! 'The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away.' That's the only text that I can look to; that, and 'God tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb.'"

And she burst into a flood of tears.

Worthy old creature! she was not the first person who had mistaken Sterne's proverb for a true fragment of Holy Writ.

Arthur knocked once, loudly and cheerfully, at the door of his father's study.

"Come in," cried the well-known voice.

Arthur entered; his father was working as

calmly as if nothing had just happened more important than a carriage horse losing a shoe. Sand baths, crucibles, and glass tubes were all round him. By his side a huge hour-glass, such as Time carries in an allegorical tapestry, shook down its thin wavering thread of recording sand. Arthur sat down; his eyes, so full of calm resolves, and that sudden wisdom that ages men in an hour, and that only misfortune brings, met those of his father; and they half betrayed their secret, for Mr. Tolpedden instantly regarded him with an expression of irrestrainable anxiety.

"Arthur," he said with peculiar tenderness, as he laid down his pen, "are you back already? Was the Magnet house, then, for once less attractive than usual?"

"I've not been to St. Petrock's yet."

"Not been yet! Why, since we parted, I've dismissed two servants, arranged to sell a farm, and been through half a dozen accounts with your uncle. You lazy fellow! Is your packing done?"

"Nearly done."

"You get to Oxford, let me see, about Friday; of course you'll go and see the Dawsons the day you're in London?"

"Yes."

"Monosyllables. Why, what's the matter, Arthur? There's something about your look I never saw before. You surely are not very sorry at leaving home; it's only for a short time. You'll like Oxford. You must be particular, mind, about your set."

"I am not going to Oxford."

"Not going to Oxford!—what do you mean? Arthur, you take that news about the Bank too much to heart, more than I thought you did. Why, you foolish fellow, we're a long way from ruin yet. I've been living beyond my means; I'll now live below them. In three years, if you work, you're almost sure of a fellowship."

"Pater, I shall not go to college. I have resolved; do not urge me. Nothing shall induce me to prey upon your scanty means. I shall go to London, and paint and write—make money in some way; there are many ways there of earning money. Hookem, or Hewer, and his lot will tell me how. All I want is £50 to keep me for a month or two, and to pay my lodgings and grub till I can see my way. I have made up my mind; nothing can move me. You may refuse me the one thing, but you will not make me do the other."

"But, Arthur, I have many ways of raising your money for college. Suppose even I sold a farm, it would only be paying ready money to secure a certain income to you for the future. Arthur, you never disobeyed me before. It has been the wish of my life to see you win high honours at Oxford. I have wasted my life by running after too many things, and in you I hoped to see myself, under better auspices, stepping in and carrying off the prize. Ha! Arthur, you don't know what a trampling struggle for existence the life of a poor man of talent in London is! Are you prepared to work with

desperate eagerness for less return than a journeyman tailor's wage?—to coin gay verses when your heart is sad, to paint quick daubs while some fine ideal is imprisoned in your brain to bear snubs from ignorant wealth, and mocking inane advice from purse-proud patrons?"

There was a deep pathos and entreaty in the father's voice, as he conjured up all the spectres that would beset the path of his son in his search for fame. But Arthur, in that hour of firm resolve, "set his face like a flint," for he knew that it was his good and not his evil influence that urged him. He was inflexible, and he knew that his father felt and understood the sternness of his resolution.

"But, my dear, dear boy, do not be rash—remain for some days, till you assure yourself that this is no changeable resolve. Remain till we can discuss how you can best push your fortunes. You cannot live by writing copies of magazine verses, however good. Perhaps Lord Rostrevor may get you a place in the War Office—he did once promise. You cannot begin painting, and then in six months send pictures to the Academy."

"I have thought of all that; but I can get some reviewing or newspaper work through Hookem: and after a year's hard work I could paint a tolerable portrait, that I'm sure. I go to-morrow morning, if I live. My dear father, encourage me—do not thwart me in what I know to be right. I will not stop another day, when my conscience tells me I ought to be helping you by hard work in London."

"My dear boy," said his father, rising, and pressing his son's hand, "I always knew you for a brave, generous-hearted, high-spirited fellow, but I little thought you would bear up so well as you have, so cheerfully and fearlessly against so unexpected and cruel a misfortune as this."

"Cruel misfortune, pater!" said Arthur, laughing; "yes, because it cripples you; but not cruel if it saves me from becoming an idle fox-hunting fellow, and makes me a great poet or a famous painter. In some respects, perhaps, it's hard; but never mind, I'll try and get some good out of it. But good-bye now, I must go and tell Liddy one or two more things about the packing, and then boot and saddle to St. Petrock's."

"Thank God for sending me such a son," said Tolpedden, as Arthur ran out of the room; "it is a blessing to overbalance the breaking of twenty banks. I cannot refuse to let him go, but it is hard!"

When Arthur reached his bed-room, he found a letter from Lucas waiting for him on the dressing-table. He gave just one sigh, as he looked at the circular post-mark, "Oxford," then he tore the envelope cheerfully open, and read,

"**M**Y DEAR OLD MAN,

"Such a lark Oxford is—boating? I believe you—best billiard-tables in England—hacks, tip-top—the bad wines here bang everything, but I've already introduced a better style of

claret-cup—some of my port is the 1820 from Plumpton—governor's blue seal—sad fiery stuff here. We're longing to see you, and show you round—where are we now?—why, just going to Henley for a spree—mine is the fastest set out. Tat ta—go to Poole's, if you want clothes.

“Yours ever,

“MARTIN LUCAS.

“P.S.—Kind regards to all friends, and the little man and his lot particularly. Tell Bradbrain I'll send him the tenner I borrowed—he's the sort of fellow to give one a leg up.”

CHAPTER XIX.

SUNSET AT DUNCHINE.

A RTHUR TOLPEDDEN had taken his farewell of Bradbrain, M. Chatelet, and the Tregellases. He was too proud to express his regret freely to his old tutor. Lucy was out, but the children gave him a clamorous farewell after their manner. Mrs. Tregellas was surprised at the suddenness of his departure for London, but for several secret reasons not altogether sorry at it; and Mr. Tregellas, while deeply lamenting the misfortunes that had compelled him to abandon his hopes of University fame, warmly applauded the generous and chivalrous impulse that had led to his decision.

"My dear Arthur," he said, as he followed him to the garden-gate, "you have the true spirit of the old knight-errants upon you; may you hew down giants, and rescue forlorn princesses as bravely as you bore off the silver cup, and saved our Lucy's life. I had hoped to have seen you a double first—perhaps I may still. This cloud will soon pass—I think you all take too gloomy a view of the matter. The bank will no doubt pay a good dividend—I am so sorry Lucy has gone out, for I am sure she'll be sorry. I'll try and drive her over to-morrow, to see you before you go—but you leave for Bodmin so early, I am afraid."

"Yes, before seven," said Arthur, with an almost irrestrainable sigh.

"Good-bye, my dear fellow—God be with you!"
"Good-bye."

To go without seeing Lucy was the last drop of bitterness in Arthur's cup. That made the parting terrible indeed; but yet he had resolved not to remain another day, and he dared not change his resolution. He dared not even appear to waver—a moment of hesitation and his father would seize it, to urge upon him all that he would lose by plunging into a career where success was doubtful, and where countless and almost insuperable obstacles had to be overcome. Did he not know from countless novels, and all sorts of miscellaneous reading, that London literary men were struggling, trampling, and butting like two rival herds of buffaloes on a disputed prairie? Had not thousands of

men of genius gone to wreck upon that great yawning quicksand? Had not men with lion-hearts, and frames hardy as wild beasts, stalwart as gladiators, men, too, with brains quick as sensitive plants to catch impressions, and swift as printing-presses to reproduce them, lived beggared, and died half-starved outcasts, in their vain search for wealth, social position, and fame? Was there in England any real respect for talent, any wish to discover and honour it, unless it were gilded and placed on the pedestal of gold, hereditary or acquired? What amulet had he, inexperienced, unfortunate, to guide him safely through the labyrinth? What enchanted armour had he with which to face the spectres and dangers that awaited him in the great selfish, cruel city? Why should the angels guard him, when already they had suffered so many to perish? But once out in the open, with the wild, fresh, moorland air beating on his face, all these cowardly and undermining fears melted at once before the fuller pulse of his old courage and the unquenched glow of his generous resolve. The sword of Faith, was it not in his hand?—the breastplate of Hope was upon his breast—he wore upon his head the helmet of Truth, and over his heart hung the jewelled amulet of Love. At the first breathing of one secret prayer, all those gibbering goblins had vanished.

So, in the old legends of St. Anthony of the Desert, all night the skeleton ostriches, toad dra-

gons, serpent bats, eyeless crocodiles, grimacing dwarfs, threatening witches, grinning sorcerers, and flame-winged devils howled, roared, blasphemed, and shrieked round the old hermit as he pored over his huge breviary. But when daybreak spread its first rosy banner in the east, the good angels came, and the phantoms faded into vapour, and from the bright open gates of Paradise came soothing voices, and the music of the golden harps.

Afraid of his own heart, Arthur began almost to rejoice that he had not had the pain of wishing Lucy farewell. It required a great courage to have to tell her of his being obliged to leave, still more to tell her that he had been obliged to abandon all his dreams of University fame.

Had it been the eve of starting to matriculate, Arthur would have thought no more of leaving home than if he had been only starting to ride to covert. But now, launching into an unknown future, leaving one he loved to descend, as it were, a shaft of unknown depth, it seemed like an eternal parting, and his heart was moved to its centre.

With what photographic force and clearness every object seemed to present itself as he took the path leading to the sea, resolved to have one last look at the old view from the cliffs at Duncine. How lonely and mournful now the granite walls rose beside the treeless roads! How bleak the moorlands were, how desolate the black cliffs, that had been fatal to how many vessels, and yet to part with them, too, was like parting

with old friends, for every crag and stone had been familiar to him from boyhood.

Half mournfully, yet with every sinew braced for the coming effort, like a rider's for a dangerous leap, Arthur strode down the valley to where the tide was coming, in fast and foaming haste, up the little desolate bay of Dunchine. There, in the black, wave-eaten caves, the living breakers frothed and tossed. There, up to the black water line, the green deluge slowly rose; above, the sea-birds screamed, and whirled round the jagged headlands, against which the fresh, cold autumn wind beat in ceaseless anger. There, on the grass-covered hills to the right, facing the main, the sheep scrambled and fed; but there was no human being within eye-shot. In the distance, far as the horizon, stretched the great tremulous grey sea, sunlit only in patches, everywhere else cold, sullen, and threatening; one vast churchyard, tenanted by the long-forgotten dead. No fluttering sail specked the great desert plain. The only sound was the muffled roar of the breakers against the iron-bound shore, and the nearer splash of the little cascade of the valley, as it fell, whitening into foam, over the thick water-weeds that grew from the rock, under the crane that had once been used to load the Port Isaac vessels with slate.

Skimming a slate at a distant sea-gull, and rolling in a block of stone to hear the sullen splash as it reached the water, Arthur dashed at the steps cut in the rock, and scaled them with a vigour

and carelessness that could have been acquired only by habit ; once, and once only, he sat down on a step to look back at the great spouts of foam that sprang up like sudden fountains when the advancing wave met the outermost pickets of rocks.

In long lines, eastward and westward, this ceaseless attack was being urged and being repelled. It was as if, earth being besieged, angry Tritons were riding on every billow. Some minds are daunted by such wild and grand scenes, but men of the true heroic temper feel their hearts expand and their pulse quicken at such moments. There Arthur sat on his “coign of vantage,” thinking of the old princes of West Cornwall, of Arthur, the “flower of kings,” and of the King Mark in the old romance of “Sir Tristrem,” who loved this old sea fortress of the Britons.

“ Un chastel
Qui moult par art e fort e bel,
Ne cremoist assalt ne engin qui vaille,
Sur la mer en Cornouaille.”

Then he saw sweep past him up those stairs the ancient kings, in their gold-broidered robes, and knights, whose steel-clad feet clashed upon the winding stairs on the rock-side, till starting from his reverie, like a guilty thing

“ Upon a fearful summons.”

Arthur sprang up the remaining stairs, and through the old iron gate, singing that song so sweet to his ear, “ Blue eyes of spring, the violets !” and think-

ing of that night when he saw the mermaid spreading her hair in the moonbeams.

He passed the bastion, and the mournful slate-stone ramparts, with their small, square arrow loops and their narrow, arched, thirteenth-century doorways, thinking of how, on the day of Hookem's pic-nic, he and Lucy had looked at them together. That day had consecrated the place in his mind. Never before had the walls looked so lichenless and bare, so gloomy and monumental; never had the slate shingles looked so corroded and so fretted by time. The very soil, in places grey and shingly with decomposed silt, seemed blasted into perpetual barrenness.

Up with quick foot Arthur leaped, bending his way to one of his favourite haunts, the little ruined chapel of the castle, whose four walls stand in almost the centre of the little peninsula of slate. He clambered up the worn tabular ledges of rock, where the sheep had made vestiges of a rude path; he bounded over the great tussocks of coarse dry grass, and the little bulbous hillocks of sea-pinks. He passed those rude mounds where Sir Lancelot's companions in arms are supposed to sleep. He still kept singing the mystical words of Heine. On both sides of him the sea-spirits sent up their ceaseless moans of agony as he sang blythe and loud as a young Norseman on an exploring foray.

For a moment, Arthur, aroused by a sudden glow upon the wall of the chapel, turned to the west, and saw, with all the rapture of a Par-

see poet, that the sunset was fast blossoming there.

A Shechinah of splendour was widening as he looked over the sea. A great lowering bulk of grey cloud that had long since betrayed by sullen gleams and partial revelations that it concealed a secret within its bosom, now displayed below its glistening tinsel edges the lower rim of a globe of burning pure purple fire, whose glow fused all around it, into luminous depths, and an ineffable glory of light. Then above and below its fan of rays, traversing dark or only partially lit clouds, there spread a rosy splendour that was re-echoed in the east, which flushed and tinged every little random and floating cloudlet, hitherto golden orange as the flesh of an apricot, bathing all the horizon in one surface of serene light, and concentrating to a focus of supreme lustre.

Arthur gazed on the spectacle, lost in a calm delight. He regarded the pageant both as a poet and as a colorist. It effaced for the moment all small sorrows and fretting cares.

Tolpedden turned to take a last look at the chapel —the place where he had once been with Lucy. The old haunt where he had so often spent hours sketching and brooding over old ballads. The path to the old corroded western doorway of the chapel lay away from the cliff. As he turned the corner, and carelessly entered the enclosure, some person who had been kneeling, unobserved by him at the first glance, in the shadow of the old stone

altar, rose and turned her head, surprised to hear a footstep.

Gracious Heavens! it was Lucy Tregellas! She essayed to speak, but no special words were audible, though her eyes smiled. In a moment Arthur was by her side, nor did she draw away her little hand when he pressed it between his. In a moment, as if by mutual agreement, they were sitting together on the shaft of a pillar that lay near the altar-stone.

"How glad I am, Lucy, to meet you—how lucky I am!"

Here his voice faltered, for he remembered what he had to communicate.

"I come here often," said she; "it is such a beautiful old place—so solemn, so sacred, and it is dear to me for many reasons. I hope you are getting stronger, Mr. Tolpedden. Mamma thinks you really ought to go away for change of air."

"Don't call me Mr. Tolpedden, Lucy," said Arthur, pressing the little warm hand that lay so meekly and passively in his, and at the same time looking up into the calm pure face that was so glorified in the sunset which turned the fair hair into waves of innocuous flame. "Do you remember the last time you and I were alone together, and what awoke me when I fainted after the mare had fallen dead?"

As Arthur spoke almost imperceptibly, his right hand moved round her waist, while his left hand still retained its hold.

"Oh! that terrible moment! Oh, yes! wasn't it dreadful!"

"I would risk ten such spills for that moment of waking, Lucy. Lucy dear, do you not remember what awoke me?"

Lucy's colour could be seen to deepen, even through the flush of sunset that dyed her face, as she turned towards the altar, and began counting the dog's-teeth mouldings below the ledger stone, as if unconsciously, with her little gloved hand.

"I thought you were dead," she said in a low voice. "I was still half stunned. I did not know what I did. It is cruel to remind me of it."

"Lilly, I have come to tell you news that perhaps will not be so painful for you to hear as it is to me to tell."

Lilly turned and grasped his hand without knowing it; for his voice had altered its tone, and was sad as the night wind. In how many ways the heart betrays itself. If anyone less sceptical than a lover had needed stronger proofs of the state of Lilly's feelings than that kiss already alluded to, this anxiety ought to have satisfied him. But lovers are strange people, and are all but stone-blind, till Time couches them, and works his cruel disenchantments.

"You have some dreadful news? Oh, do tell me, Arthur! Your voice quite trembles; you're not going abroad—what is it?"

"Lilly," he said, "my father's happiness has been broken as if it had been glass. He has lost

more than twenty thousand pounds by an infamous London bank breaking. We are all but ruined. I am not going to Oxford. I am going to London to seek my fortune. In comparison with what I was when we last met, I am a beggar."

The little hand squeezed his, that touch was more eloquent than whole folios of sympathy. Bright dewdrops of tears had sprung from Lucy's eyes, and were rolling down her cheeks.

"To London?" she said in a low, faltering voice, as if she dreaded what he would next say.

"Yes, to London, dearest, and to-morrow. I must and will get money to help my father. His discoveries must not be stopped, nor shall he bear privations while I am flaunting at college. There are, thank God, other roads to success beside the Oxford one."

"But it is so sudden—so very sudden. We heard that you were going to dispute Mr. Mordred's right to this mine. They say he cheated your father out of it. With that restored, you would soon be rich."

A thousand conflicting passions were writhing in Arthur's heart. The sudden thought of the still mysterious fraud roused him into a gust of rage, fierce but transitory.

"I could crush that vile scoundrel like this stone," he said, leaping up, and dashing a fragment of Purbeck marble that lay near the altar at a tombstone, upon which it shattered; "that deed was as much robbery as if he had forced his way

into our house at night with knife and crow-bar."

Then he sat down calmly, and took again the yielding hand.

"Lilly," he said, "you seem now like an angel sent from heaven to comfort me. You know I love you—will you love me?" His arm was round her again, his face close to hers, his eyes glowed with passionate entreaty. What simple words passion uses!

Lilly trembled, but she did not withdraw her hand—how could she, when he held it so firm?

"Lilly, you do love me?"

She was silent, and trembled more than before. Then through the silence came a single word, infinely holy, when it comes from such lips pure as those of the inhabitants of heaven.

"Yes."

With what rapture Arthur kissed her mouth, eyes, and her forehead, just where the hair grew paler and softer, and clasped her to his heart.

"You do love me, then, Lilly?"

"Yes, yes, dear Arthur, I do dearly love you."

This was said with a murmur such as the dove makes in the beech-wood at nesting time, not louder nor less full of tenderness.

"My sweet, my soul's delight!" What strange epithets of joy and love he lavished on her as he kissed her a thousand times. How can I enumerate the epithets? How can I picture the purity of that eternal and imperishable union of two hearts, of two minds, of two natures.

"I am to leave you, Lilly," Arthur said, as they stood by the altar, absorbed in that splendour, like two spirits newly beatified; "let us promise before God, before this altar, where He was once worshipped by men now in heaven, let us promise to be true to each other, to accept no other love, and to keep our hearts pure to a changeless faith."

Hand-in-hand before that altar, they knelt and exchanged their holy vow, in all the fervid sincerity and deep passion of first love. The human heart knows but one spring—the love of later life is cold, reasoning, and tame, beside such love as they felt.

Then they walked, clasped together, to the edge of the cliff. The rose colour still lingered in the east—here and there, over the grey sea, spread wavering, horizontal bars of fading crimson. High and higher rose the first star, with its sparkle clear and keen as that of some matchless diamond. Below a dark wave rolled landward, like some angry monster. Through the solemn silence of evening, the roar of the breakers sounded sadder and wilder than by day.

A few moments only, and what a change had taken place in the hearts of the two lovers! Life now was a calm, unbroken dream of all-absorbing happiness. They were now one—life, fortune, everything seemed poor and diminutive compared with the joy of that love, though they must part so soon. There was no doubt now, no conceal-

ment, no agonies of jealous fear ; neither time, nor misfortune, no, nor death itself could efface that love, so unselfish, so pure, and so intense. To them Paradise was won back, and earth seemed to have but these two for its happy inmates. Destiny itself, dreadful destiny, was powerless to harm them now.

“Lilly, dear Lilly,” said Arthur, as they walked on together, with that divine confidence that new love gives us. The big moon, now in her third quarter, rose over the sea, and turned its vast weltering flood to one broad surface of trembling silver, the cliffs to the shining bulwarks of an enchanted country ; “it was on such a night as this I first lost my heart to the sea-spirit of Endellion.”

“And do you know, Arthur,” said Lilly, looking up into his face, “I too felt on that night as if some change had come over me.”

“My own, my dearest,” was the reply, and it was sealed with the thousandth kiss, “Lilly, darling, I have a secret to tell you.”

Lilly twined her two hands round the arm she leaned on.

“Lilly, I like Bradbrain—he is a bold, generous fellow, and he takes to me—I am sure of it, from his manner when we parted ; besides, he was so sorry for that spill, and refused to take any money for the mare, though he had valued her so much.”

“I do not like him—I never liked him,” said Lucy, and she shuddered as she spoke.

“I do think he despises Mordred for cheating

about that mine—I think he is to be depended upon; but he has lived among wild people; he is accustomed to a different code of morals, and I fear he is trying, perhaps almost unconsciously to himself, to wind his cobwebs round the heart of my dear little foolish aunt. Now, what I want you, darling, to do, is to watch him, and to put the dear little woman on her guard against Bradbrain's soft words and dangerous beguilements. I dare not tell my father my suspicions, Lilly; and how could I have the heart to disturb my good old uncle's happiness. A word or two of alarm and distrust from you will nip the evil in the bud. I know you will do this, Lilly; and you will write to me, darling—she will enclose your letters, I have asked her. Do not let her know that your suspicions are the result of mine."

"I will, Arthur. I had feared for some time that there was something between Mrs. Tolpedden and Mr. Bradbrain; and you will write to me, too, Arthur, often?"

"Very, very often, dear. You are mine now! Another kiss to ratify the promise. There is some one calling to us, Lilly."

There were shouts of "Lucy! Lucy!" from the path leading to the ruins, then sounds of boyish voices from beyond the castle.

Lucy withdrew her arm, and her eyes assumed a startled expression.

"It is George and Herbert, Arthur. I told them to come for me as soon as the moon rose.

Don't let the boys see you. I know it is very wrong to be ashamed to be seen with you, but I do feel afraid papa would think we came here on purpose to meet. Good-bye, Arthur. It is very hard to part."

"Dearest!—dearest! farewell!"

Arthur pressed her to his heart, their lips clung together in one long, deep, ardent kiss, such as martyrs condemned to death might take at their parting. She was gone.

What wonder that when Arthur stepped again from behind the chapel, as the boys' voices died away down the distant steps, a glory seemed to have passed from sea to air, and the very moon-beams seemed to shine with a colder and abated light.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GRIDIRON CLUB AT HOME.

TROUBLES, when a man is still young, are, after all, mere flying pains. It is not till he gets older that they turn to chronic aches and compound rheumatism. The parting at Bodmin Road Station was painful to Arthur. His father, as he saw, required all his self-command to restrain the moisture in his eyes turning to visible drops, and the worthy lieutenant had to keep incessantly talking about the weather, and the

probability of his having to come to town to press his petition.

But as soon as the train had fairly glided off, the wheels had settled down to their work, and the steam's agitation had subsided into methodical pulsations, the moving scene, the adventurousness of the expedition, not to speak of hunger, excitement, and the business arrangements of the journey, such as the changes of train, &c., had begun to exercise their irresistible influence, and by the time the great wooded hills and engine-houses of Cornwall had begun to fade, like dissolving views, into the beautiful river scenery visible as you approach Plymouth, he had grown more calm and reconciled to his fate. At Torquay he actually fell asleep, and at Exeter he awoke to avenge his wrongs on a good dinner.

Nature is very kind, and has balsams more or less efficacious for most of our heart-wounds. The bustle of departure, the struggle, the legal and medical business of dying, even the arrangements necessary for funeral ceremonies afterwards, all serve to lessen the incitable pains of death and parting. The love of Lucy Tregellas, and the desire to help his father, were sovereign amulets against all base fears, and all morbid regrets.

Arthur knew London pretty well, so it was a mere matter of course for him to take a bed at the "Tavistock" the night he arrived, and the next morning (December 4) to open the campaign by sallying out to Abbey Road, St. John's Wood, to

search out Dodgeson's studio, and discuss his own chances of success as an artist.

It was a pleasant, glistening morning, and the houses, receding down the streets into grey perspective, looked cheerful enough. The Hansoms dashing recklessly by omnibuses, piled with hecatombs of City men coming into town, were fresh and interesting objects to the young knight-errant, as he cut across Tottenham Court Road, and made his vigorous way north-westward to the disforested suburb.

Once past the "York and Albany," a short walk along the uniform road, and a turn to the left, between rows of little trim villas, each with its bright little garden, brought him to Dodgeson's house in the Abbey Road. A smart little servant ushered him through the garden to the long detached room that served as Dodgson's studio. It looked out on ground destined for a square, but at present a jungle of docks, nettles, and dandelions.

Dodgeson was at lunch at a small deal table, opposite him sat a truculent-looking man, evidently a professional model, who, attired in the scarlet robes and red hat of a cardinal, was just then stolidly intent on scooping the marrow out from the chink of a mutton-chop bone.

A picture of "The Eve of St. Bartholomew" (a meeting of conspirators), stood on a straddling easel, close to a raised platform covered with faded red cloth. The buffet and tables were strewn with sticky bottles, black and burnished copper-plates

for etching, tubes of paint, brushes, and wood blocks, with one side whitened ; the walls were hung with casts of heads, arms, legs, sketches, and charcoal drawings. The chairs were lumbered with wheel-ruffs, rapiers, trunk-hose, and short cloaks ; and at one special table lay Dodgeson's palette, a rainbow of colours, among which shone out every sort of crimson, scarlet, and flamingo. It lay near the morning's copy of the *Daily Telegraph*.

"Why, good gracious, Tolpedden, powers about us," said Dodgeson, leaping up, "who ever expected to see you in town, of all men ! Well, old boy, how are you ? Here, look here, Holford. I shan't want you any more to-day ; you can go on to Mr. Calderon as soon as you've finished your beer —I know he wants you ; but mind, you must be here at ten, sharp, to-morrow. Here's your four shillings for the two hours."

The cardinal nodded, and continued his anatomical researches.

"I think," he said, "I shall cut Mr. Calderon for to-day, sir, and go and develop my biceps a little at skittles ; one must loaf now and then. I've got a friend, a barman at the 'Fortune of War,' who lays money on me. Ten sharp, sir, I think you said ?"

"Ten, sharp."

"All right, sir ; don't let me stop your talking with the gent. Your picture's coming together, sir, nicely."

"That's the most cheeky individual going," said

Dodgeson with his half-closed eyes, as the model unrobed himself, drained off his beer, and took his leave with great *nonchalance*, carrying the two pewter pots dangling on his finger ; “but he’s very useful for mediæval heads, especially villains. His cheek-bones are so prominent, and he strips well for arms and legs. He’s good at sparring, too. I do a little in that way with him and Hewer when my liver get’s torpid.”

“Where is Hewer ?”

“The old boy’s gone up the Thames to a yacht match.”

“And Fisher ?”

“Working away at his Academy picture—‘Swift stopped by Mohocks at Temple Bar.’ Fine thing, sir—torchlight. Swift—grand figure—rebuking the scoundrels who are threatening him. A 1, sir. We’ll go and see it presently. But what brought you up ?—quite recovered from that awful spill ?”

“Quite, thank you ; but what a fine tragic picture this is of yours ! I like the Cardinal, with his hand over his mouth, and his eyes peering from the ambush of shadow ; and I like this bold chivalrous fellow, too, in white, who is breaking his sword before the king. Well done, Dodgeson—that’ll do.”

“Yes,” said Dodgeson, “but it wants something here ;” and he waved his hand all over the canvas. “More central light, you know, and these Huguenot women, passing to their prayer-meeting, taunted by the sentinels, must be more

back. How do you like the girl's face?"

"Charming—those blue eyes are exquisitely put in."

"Talking of girls, how is everyone down in Cornwall? Hookem was here yesterday, sitting for that head of Branthorne in the corner. Bless my soul, what a bumptious party that is; but still I like him. He's full of his 'Expurgation of Guy Fawkes,' swears he was a great soldier, poet, hero, and the noblest of martyrs. Oh! he goes in the whole hog for him, I can tell you."

"Ah! these partisans and hired advocates, they whitewash everyone now. The blacker a man is, the better he shows the power of their detergent. They prove that Bacon had moral courage, that Foote was an honest man, and that Sterne and Dr. Dodd were pattern human beings."

Dodgeson seized a wheel ruff from the chair, and threw it round Arthur's neck, then he placed a little round blue velvet cap bound with a cameo, and looped with a white feather, slantingly on Arthur's head, and receded to a distant corner to contemplate him with rapture.

"By Jove!" he said, "it is just like a pale Rembrandt. I never saw anything come so stunning in all my life—light on one cheekbone, soft shadow over the eyes. Just give me five minutes sitting, and I'll catch the effect—head a little more to the left, thank you. By George! I would have given £10 for this effect."

"And how does the wood go on?" said Arthur,

patiently resigning himself to a stiff and immovable position on a raised chair.

"Oh! toll loll—laid it by for a bit, now I've done Goldsmith; they cut one's work very unintelligently, and it hurts one's eye for colour. This is the true thing I am on; perhaps I shall get it engraved. I want £300 for it. It's a golden opportunity for you. Don't move, my dear fellow—my dear fellow; I'm just putting in your left eye—don't dodge about so."

"Putting in?—the sun is just putting it out," said Arthur, laughing.

Dodgeson darted to the blind and lowered it, then inconsequentially rushed to a great broad piece of gilded leather hanging bought in Venice, and shook it.

"Look at this," he said; "real Venetian, given me by Sir Edwin last week for a black and tan pup he coveted; isn't the colour glorious for backgrounds? So, you wretch, you won't give me a paltry £300 for this *chef d'œuvre*? Very well; you'll repent it, mark that. Gambart 'll make £600 out of it, besides exhibiting."

"My dear Dodgeson," said Arthur bitterly, "you don't know how very little we are able to afford now—even three hundred pence for a picture. A bank has smashed in London, and my father is ruined."

"You don't say so."

"I do, indeed; that is why I am in London. I have come to earn my bread."

Now this was making rather too much of it, and Dodgeson being a shrewd man, and an older man than Arthur, saw it at once, and smiled grimly.

"Come, come, old boy," he said, "not quite ruin, to have fifty pounds in your pocket, and brains enough in your head to coin more. Talk about bothers—everyone has them. Look at me. Here's this block" (in his odd way Dodgeson has sat down at a table and begun to work with a pencil at a wood-block), "I did it for *Once a Week*, three months ago, and back it comes this morning with a civil note, telling me it would be too expensive in the cutting. Nice thing that; and now I'm wasting time, like an idiot as I am, trying to alter it for *Cassell's*. But what are you going in for, art or literature—making tin somehow, I suppose?"

"For both," said Arthur, bravely, as he rolled up a cigarette from Dodgeson's proffered book and india-rubber pouch, and arranged his chair snugly before the open door of Dodgeson's stove.

"This is the best book published—Job's!" said Dodgeson, as he ruffled the white leaves of his cigarette-book.

"And paid the publisher best, too," rejoined Arthur.

"There is plenty of tin to be got at art," said Dodgeson, stroking his beard, "if you once get known; books to illustrate, etchings to sell, portraits to paint, and so on; but it takes time, let me

tell you. You draw cleverly, but you have still a great deal to learn before you draw correctly, or to satisfy those beasts, the critics, and that lot—most of whom, by-the-bye, know as much about art, really, as my shoe. You must draw the statue, and get into the academy, you know, and all that sort of thing; or you can go to that first-rate place in Newman Street, and draw from the life at night. Then there's anatomy to get up, costume, &c. &c.—lots of things. You can't pull it off at once, you see."

Arthur groaned, then spoke sanguinely.

"Of course there are difficulties," he said, looking into the fire; "but I hope to pull through. I can do portraits, perhaps, first, and then creep on to an historical picture. I have a new notion of that scene Delacroix did from 'Quentin Durward,' that one where the wild boar of Ardennes murders the old archbishop, and I've made some sketches for it."

"Awfully tough to work out. By-the-bye, how's Bradbrain? How infernally cut up he was when he heard about your spill. We were with him at the time; he turned ghastly pale; he really is a fine fellow, but the devil for play, and that sort of thing; and, above all, how is that charming Miss Tregellas fellows said you were such awful spoons on?"

Arthur smiled, and his eyes sparkled.

"Very well, thank you," he said; "and as beautiful as a butterfly!"

"Is it true what Waverton told us, that Boscauen is going to cut you out in that quarter?"

"Stuff!" said Arthur, gravely. "I ought to know."

"Now don't cut up rusty," said Dodgeson, smiling, and looking up from his work. "We'll change the subject. Are you a Pre-Raphaelite—shall you go in for high finish, three months to a brick wall, and that sort of thing?"

"Well, to an extent; but no raw metallic greens for me, no red-haired women, or cross-looking, ascetic, lean beauties, with protruding chins, all of one type—not if I know it! I don't myself like pictures all foreground, and, singularly enough, I prefer pretty to ugly women."

"You must choose your style," said Dodgeson, dipping his brush into a bottle of Chinese white that stood before him. "Go in either for rosy theatrical rustics, beautiful, and over-clean, Don Quixotes, men in armour, Venetians, or ladies of the harem, and that sort of thing. Get known to the dealers, cultivate old Flamboyant, who's, after all, not a bad style, though he's the biggest Jew I know; make friends with the critics, and get a patron."

"I will begin this very night," said Arthur, "before my resolution cools. I'll go to the place at Newman Street, and to-morrow call Hookem, and see if I can get some work on the *Forge*."

"Do you think art and literature will go well together in harness?" said Dodgeson, putting up

his eye-glass, and regarding Arthur with affectionate curiosity.

"I think so," replied Arthur. "At all events I can put a saddle on whichever turns out the best horse. I must make money, and soon, too. I've no time to lose. Good-bye, I shall look in to-morrow, when I've got a lodging. Good-bye."

London is a strong place to take by storm, how many die in the trenches when the siege has subsided into a blockade !

CHAPTER XXI.

THE "FORGE."

IT was the pious custom of the much-abused middle ages to launch a vessel with prayers and benedictions, waving of censers, and splashes of holy wine. How much more would such valedictory ceremonies become the leave-taking of a country youth about to seek his fortune in London ! Solitudes of Arctic Oceans, loneliness of mountains and of deserts, ye are mere shadows to the loneliness that may be felt in London !

What ghastly first floors, what dismal apartments did Arthur not spend one whole day in reconnoitering ! What hard, subtle, false old widows with broad braids, dirty caps, and greasy mourning ! what drunken, scraggy old maids ! what grinding, thievish,

jaded old braces of sisters did he not encounter and disappoint! In the Temple, what strange burglars' dens, all passage and cupboard, did he not shudder at; and in Grays' Inn what suicidal nests of dirty rooms, half of them all but windowless.

At last he settled down to two clean second-floor rooms in Keppel Street, at the back of the British Museum. There, for a pound a week, he calculated, he should be near the Reading Room, and the Newman Street studio, and not many leagues away from the Sultan Editor, and the office of the *Forge*—his gold mine that was to be.

Having, then, brought his portmanteau, and small traps from the "Tavistock" to No. 77, Arthur set out boldly for Catherine Street, where the *Forge* office was, eager, sanguine, full of the brightest dreams, and with the rainbow of Hope encircling him with its unfading triumphal arch.

It was about three o'clock when he got there, and the clerk in the office below informed him, through the rails of a sort of prisoner's dock, that Mr. Hookem was in, but very busy, for it was the day before publishing day.

"Name, sir," said the sharp clerk, turning to a long flexible hookah tube that hung from the wall at his back, and whistling up it like an alarmed smuggler.

"Mr. Tolpedden," said Arthur, quite unabashed at even the smartest and most knowing of London clerks.

In a minute or two there came down a subterranean voice, to which the clerk listened with head on one side, and the respect due to oracles.

"Will you walk upstairs, sir?—first to the right," said the clerk, awe-struck at the instantaneousness with which the levee had been granted, and pointing to a swing-glass door that led to a flight of stairs.

At the top of the stairs stood no less than three dirty-faced printers' devils waiting for proofs and copy, and in the ante-room adjoining three fretful young contributors, nervous, angry, and impatient, were reading, or trying to read, the morning papers.

A few moments after Arthur had entered, one flap of a folding door flew open, in darted Mr. Hookem, and tore him away by one arm into the front room, in spite of all the frowns and irritation of the men who had been longest waiting.

The room was well furnished, but the red-striped chairs were splashed with ink, and the walls were hung with files of proofs, and blocked up with shelves of reference volumes. The table was strewn with slips of MS., proofs, the ink still wet on the last slip, and files of Blue Books, very Ossas and Pelions of dulness.

"Well, my dear fellow, how *are* you?" said the Editor, resuming his cane-backed throne. "Who ever expected to see you in Babylon! What a game thing that was, to be sure, your shooting that mare of Bradbrain's! Delighted to see you! How are they all?"

"I fear I am making those gentlemen in the next room very envious."

"Serve 'em right. Why don't they write what I like, and what I want, and not refine and split straws till there is no black or white left in the review. One man all extract, another all fad of his own, a third all personal abuse. Won't do—not the *Forge* tone. I won't have it. They shall cool their heels an hour yet. Up, I suppose, Arthur, for the opera or some ball? And how is that infernal mine going on? It was a nice affair, that was—rather near the wind that of my friend Mordred, if ever a thing was. 'Fore George! sir, yes. By-the-bye, I heard your father was hit rather hard by that swindling bank?"

"So we were, worse luck, that's what brings me to town. You will be surprised to hear that I have given up all thoughts of the University, and am going to try my hand at art and literature."

"Tut! tut! tut! tut!" chirruped the Editor, troubled but in a cheery way. "That's a bad lookout for you. What changes of fortune one sees! Well, I suppose I must be godfather to you in this wicked world of London, and put you up to the way of doing it; but you'll have to wait; it can't be done in a day—must serve an apprenticeship."

"Can you give me some work, Hookem?" asked Arthur boldly, coming to the point.

"Well, you see I'm not the only person interested; and ours is a peculiar, most peculiar paper. Now, the *Trimmer* is quite another thing,

You'd have to learn our style—we are very particular about style. But why take to journalism, poor, wearisome, mill-horse, treadmill journalism? Good gracious! my dear fellow, don't throw away your brilliant talents on our light confectionary business—mere tartlets, sir, for the day's consumption. No, sir, write a book, and aim at immortality."

"A book?" said Arthur, rather startled at the proposition; "a book is a great undertaking."

"Not at all—not at all—done successfully every day by the most ordinary people, who have simply no capital to go on, but tact, sir, tact, industry, and patience. You must watch the market."

"But how can you lead the public if you live by following its momentary whims?" asked Arthur.

"Half lead and half follow, of course," said the editor, as he patted the gold hunter-watch in his left waistcoat-pocket. "My dear boy, you *must* write a book. There are subjects by the dozen—'The History of Scientific Discovery in England,' 'The History of the Search for the North West Passage,' 'The History of the Search for the Nile,' &c., &c. Mind, there must be no hurry. Take two years at least; above all things, begin by making a hit—*il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte*; after that your way is easy—publishers seek you, and an edition will go off in a day; miss the first time, and you'll be five years trying to retrieve yourself."

Now this advice was shrewd and well-meant, but it rather galled Arthur, because it was mixed with much that was selfish, hard, and inconsiderate.

"But who is to keep me for two years," said the aspirant, somewhat bitterly, "while I produce this said immortal work?"

Mr. Hookem took a big cigar out of a case, and pricked it with his penknife. Having done that, he replied grandiosely, and in his most Johnsonian manner,

"Sir, a man, if he chooses, can live on anything. When I first came to town, and began my most successful book, one that has gone through fourteen editions, and has been translated into six European languages—I refer to my work on 'The Faults and Imperfections in the Writings of William Shakspere,'—I lived anyhow. I worked all day in a newspaper office, and at night toiled at my book. That's the way, sir. Claret is not necessary to nurture the brain."

Self-made men are generally pompous. They like to taste their success. Arthur did not relish this. He was quick-tempered, he felt angry, and he showed it.

"I don't care about claret," he said; "but I must have bread and salt to maintain me, till I can write what is worth reading. Besides, I want immediate money, however little, to help my father. Can you get me some reviewing?—say books of poetry or history. I should try and be fair, and

give a clear, simple description of the contents of the book, with, now and then, when the case was obvious, a common-sense verdict. I would not abuse nor sneer if I could help it; and I would respect honest work, whoever and wherever it came from."

"My dear young friend," said Hookem, leaning back in his arm-chair, and thrusting his thumbs into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, and raising his eye-brows, "you do not know the world as well as I do. I tell you, to be able to have a dig at a book of the opposite clique is one of the greatest pleasures of a high literary position—it makes you at once feared and respected by the small yelpers and snappers. If a book is bad toned, or by a cad, never try and praise one part—to balance the running down in another. People don't like trimmers, what they want is good sound black and white. We must have cliques, and I like the one to which I belong to be strong. You will fall into my ways of thinking some day. Cliques help one on mightily. I began my career with a small clique—I shall end them the head of the most powerful clique in London."

Arthur was rather disgusted at the shameless trade-spirit and utter cynicism of the man. It all came home to him now.

"What induced you, by-the-bye, Hookem," he said, to turn the conversation, "to write your Shakspere book?—was it not rather invidious to assay gold merely to discover dross?"

Hookem laughed with a grand and pitying surprise.

"Nine-tenths of the modern authors who praised Shakspere," he said, "I knew did so only because it is the fashion, and because he is foolishly supposed to be like the sky, out of the reach of all criticism. I knew they would like to see this insensate worship of one man's mind attacked in a powerful way, so I did it. I did it with the same reluctance with which I abandoned high Toryism to join the *Forge*, when I first carried over my standard to the camp of the highest class of Liberals; but still I did it, and with the utmost preparation, and I crossed the Rubicon, sir, without disordering my forces or losing a man."

It was a feature of Mr. Hookem's way of talking, that he gave a grand national and diplomatic air to his dirtiest and most reprehensible actions. To desert a principle, to forsake a political faith, for motives of self-interest, too, are not heroic actions; but Mr. Hookem assumed the dignity of a Curtius on the brink of the pit.

"To prove my case," said Hookem, going to a shelf and taking down a superbly-bound book, glistening with gold, "I'll show you what a duty I felt it to be to hold up the errors of our great writer, whose raging haste, involutions, quibbles, and knotty sentences, have done almost as much harm to our literature as his finer passages have done good. Take this passage, 'The blanket of the dark.' Was ever such fustian known? Ignorant

readers should be told this is fustian, and be shown that no writer is above criticism. Everywhere words close packed, air wanted between the lines. ‘A jungle,’ sir, as I have said in page forty, ‘where the undergrowth dwindleth for want of space.’ Take it anywhere :

‘ Yet reason dares her no ;
For my authority bears of a credit bulk,
That no particular scandal once can touch
But it confounds the breather.’

Then here’s cant :

‘ Blow winds and crack your cheeks.’

Cheeks, indeed! Then the idea of calling the lightning to ‘ singe’ Lear’s head. My goodness! a grand image that. Pshaw! sir, it must be weeded. Common sense insists on it, sir.”

Oh! sublimity of self-conceit! Hookem was imperial in his self-elected Dictatorship.

“ It no doubt,” said Arthur, not without some effort, choking down his disgust, and trying to remember only the energy and *bonhomie* of the man —“ this no doubt serves to raise the standard of criticism; but is it not rather an ungracious task?”

“ That’s the common cry. But, sir, in doing a public duty, I despise cries, and I hope I always shall. If I merely wished to skulk away and avoid public duties, I should never have stepped forward as the rehabilitator of that great scientific discoverer, Mr. Guido Fawkes; the advocate of that martyr to the

Baconian theory, that Empedocles of an ungrateful century, that hero of chemistry, that——”

“Copy, sir,” said a black face, thrusting itself in at the door, with no prelude but a pert tap with one knuckle, “Men standing still, sir, and they want to lock up the first page.”

“Get away, you, sir!” shouted Hookem, as you would whip a stray dog back to the kennel, “and wait till I call you. Let them wait. This life is enough,” he said, turning to Arthur with elevated hands, “to drive a man mad, what with authors, printers, compositors, and readers. I told a man to write a leader last night on the London police, and he sends me a thing beginning with an anecdote of the Flying Highwayman, not a word about the habits of the force in it, so I had to graft it all over with allusions, like larding a fowl; a nice occupation, truly, for a guider of public opinion. Three hours work. Another fellow produces an essay on Civil Law, stiff and buckramed enough for a supplementary chapter to Blackstone; and then they call me tyrannical and overbearing, because I don’t give them as much work as they want—stuck-up, amateur young fellows, too, who treat my guineas as if they went for mere pocket-money, pretending to despise every author who gives his life to literature, and is honestly proud of the money that is his inadequate reward for instructing and amusing the world.”

“I am entirely with you in disliking the pretentious amateur in any profession,” said Arthur.

"You would not care for a little rough work as an apprenticeship, I know?" said the Editor, with a searching look at Arthur. "The fact is, my dear fellow, we cannot just now afford very well to pay for articles that might not suit. We have had a new engine to buy—an awful pull; but I can get you some hours' work a day, I think, at Blizzard's, that would leave you time to read, write, and paint, and bring in a little pewter, too!"

Arthur flew at the proposal as he would have done at a bull-finch in fox-hunting.

"You're very kind, Hookem," he said, warmly. "I don't care how rough the work is."

"Well, the work hasn't much romance in it; the place is in Chandos Street, Covent Garden, David and Blizzard, a sort of newspaper factory,—supply leaders and digested paragraphs simultaneously to nine country papers, all in stereotype. Good beginning—better than I got when I came first to London."

"I am most grateful," said Arthur, eagerly.

"Grateful! well, the thing hardly requires much gratitude," said Hookem, jovially; "but keep your heart up, Arthur, and go to work. There is no need to tell a young man of your sense that Rome was not built in a day. The work at Blizzard's will bring in two guineas a week, and that will keep the pot boiling for the present. There, you can train for your book. Good-bye. Excuse me now, for I'm up to my eyes in work."

Tolpedden shook the Sultan Editor's hand

warmly, and went his way, a brighter rainbow arch of Hope springing into the air as he entered St. Martin's Lane, and sought the murky den of knowledge tenanted by David and Blizzard, a den where the demon of ignorance groaned and roared as the great rollers of the steam press unceasingly crushed and mangled him beneath their ponderous and irresistible weight.

CHAPTER XXII.

NEWS FROM HOME.

TOLPEDDEN'S rooms in Keppel Street were all very well, only they were draughty and cold, and the fire always smoked, and the servant came up with dirty hands, that spoiled your appetite for breakfast.

And at night they were very well, too, only the bed-room looked down upon a mews, and every cab that returned, and dashed and rattled down the paved passage at the side of the house, seemed to drive through Arthur's body, beginning at his toes and coming out at the back of his head.

And the people of the house were also all very well, only the landlady used to go into ambiguous fits at the bottom of the stairs; and the landlord was a foolish, meek little man, with many of the facial symptoms of inebriety, who never appeared but on these occasions; and the daughter was a

silly ringleted old maid, who always wore dirty white kid gloves. Still Arthur, in all the hope and buoyancy of early manhood, cared for none of these things, and drew and wrote, heedless of all annoyance, because there was always one bright, pure, loving face looking from the clouds, and smiling comfort.

The fourth day of his being in London, Arthur, on his return from his night-work at Davis and Blizzard's, where he was daily engaged till past midnight, found, to his joy, when he struck a light, a bulky letter lying for him on the slab in the hall, close to his bed-room candle.

He tore it open, and read its contents there and then.

The first was from his father.

“MY DEAREST BOY,

“Need I tell you how we have missed you, how Jack mourns for you, how even Gipsy hangs her head, and Benbow screams sorrowfully? Still, I feel it would be selfish to lament your carrying out so generous and brave a resolution. I fear by this time you have begun to find out what a slippery ice-mountain the hill is on which the Temple of Fame, as well as that of Mammon, is built. Let no desire to help me lead you to sell your birthright of talent. Keep honest fame always in view, do no work that does not lead in some way or other to the result you wish to attain in Literature or Art. Take my advice, and

do not try for both prizes. Life is short, and Art is long. There is so much to do in both professions, so many blunders to make, and to correct ; so many false paths to traverse before you can learn to avoid them ; much self-knowledge to be acquired only by temporary reverses, defeats, and disappointments. It is given to few to attain success at once, ‘royally (*königlich*)’ as Goethe used to say. A young man, you will find, has also to do much for mere bread, and to victual his forces, much that does not help, and even that delays the campaign.

“ But I am writing as if I was still a soldier. Let me now speak as a minister, in my other deserted profession. Take the sword of faith, fight and plough alternately, as the Israelites did. Remember the name the children gave you. You are Greatheart, and must not dare to flinch for even a moment with a coward fear. The world is a poltroon ; take it boldly and laughingly by the throat, and it will cringe at your feet. Beware of the rocks men split upon, and do not run after a dozen things at once, like a dog in a snow-storm. It is a bitter thought to me sometimes, in moments of despondency, to think what narrow-brained fools, but still men seeking with tenacity one success, have passed me in the race of life.

“ But enough of preaching ; you have practice, which is better. The mine Mordred cheated us out of so infamously, after a most suspicious lull, has begun again to yield copper, and cheer

the shareholders, amongst whom, I hear, are most of our friends, except the Tregellases. For some reason or other, that I cannot divine, Tregellas has been rather cold in his manner towards me lately, and Lucy has only been to see your aunt once, I think, since your departure. The captain is very busy just now rigging a little schooner for Johnny. He threatens to write. I am working hard at my chemistry. Sometimes I have gleams of hope, and then again I almost despair. There are, I feel sure, great secrets concealed in the allegories of Paracelsus; but ‘the hatching of the Basilisk,’ is, I fear, no easy task.

“I remain, my dear Arthur,

“Your very loving father,

“HENRY TOLPEDDEN.

“Arthur Tolpedden, Esq.”

The lieutenant’s letter was brief, but characteristic.

“MY DEAR ARTHUR,

“I suppose now you’re getting well away, you’re sheeting home, and hoisting up top-gallants and royals. Presently, I hope, you’ll trim the yards, and make sail on her. I pray God the wind may be light, and the sea smooth. It is hard to run on the Kentish Knock, or the Gallopper, just as one is near harbour, like your father and myself. God keep you from all lee shores, world without end, amen! We caught

a rabbit (Walker and I) last night among the cabbages. Jack, Teddy, and Kate send love. Even Bobby misses you. Polly wants to write, so I mustn't say more. The carriage-horses sold pretty well. That beast Mordred bought them. I am rigging a taut little cobel for one of the boys.

“Your loving uncle,

“NELSON TOLPEDDEN.

“Arthur Tolpedden, Esq.”

Mrs. Tolpedden's letter was kind and simple-hearted.

“MY DEAR ARTHUR,

“I miss you, and so do the dear children. Why go to that dreadful London and turn painter? I suppose you'll some day send us your own portrait painted by yourself. Do not be unhappy, but I must tell you that the Tre-gellases have been rather cold and formal lately, since our misfortunes. Lucy came the other day, and asked very kindly after you, but said nothing about writing. She is going away soon for a month. They do talk of Captain Boscawen admiring her, but, like a true, confiding lover, you will of course laugh at this report. Mr. Brad-brain is here to see Teddy, who has a cough, and he sends his kindest regards. I must conclude, for Walker is waiting for the post-bag.

“Yours very affectionately,

“MARY TOLPEDDEN.

“P.S.—All the children send their love.”

Lucy's not writing—that shot a pang through Arthur's heart; but he comforted himself by the thought that she only waited for a letter from him, and he reproached himself for having delayed it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. TREVENA AND THE BISHOP.

ST. NECTAN'S was a "peculiar," and Mr. Trevena's feudal suzerain was not the Bishop of Exeter, but the Bishop of Blank.

Much to the horror of Miss Trevena, and somewhat to his own alarm, the worthy man, a fortnight after Arthur's departure, received a formal letter from the Bishop of —, requesting to see him on that day week. It was an expensive journey, but it could not be avoided. Perhaps even, he tried to believe, the bishop had written to offer him preferment. The Trevenas were not rich, and the first expenses of the Wheal Fortune had more than swallowed up all hope of a speedy dividend, sanguine as Miss Trevena still continued to be.

"It's that horrid charge of yours—I know it is, John," was all the comfort the inexorable lady would afford.

When Mr. Trevena had got out of the train, and found himself in the lime-tree walk leading to

the Bishop's palace, from the trim, quiet close of —, he felt not unlike a school-boy going to an interview with the head-master. His somewhat seedy Inverness cape, and old black wide-awake, struck him all of a sudden with a shame and a dismay that he, however, instantly dismissed from his mind as cowardly and unbecoming.

"So goes my last chance of preferment," he said to himself, as a dead leaf blew from a bough above his head, and rustled against his chest. "Well, never mind, what I wrote was for a good purpose, God knows; and there's the Wheal Fortune at my back, so it might be worse."

Then, as he pulled the visitor's bell and turned his back, a nervous dilemma presented itself—should he ask if His Lordship was in, or if the Bishop of — was at home?

Having decided on the former, Mr. Trevena was suddenly startled by finding that the door had been opened two or three minutes, and that a pert, sleek young footman was quietly and superciliously criticizing him.

His lordship was at home, but engaged—would he send in his card? Unluckily Mr. Trevena never used cards, so he sent in his name. His lordship wished to see him, and would he walk into the library?

Mr. Trevena passed up the long hall, and was shown into a splendid room, as unlike the hut of an apostle as could well be. Trevena had never seen the bishop, and therefore bowed, as a tall, stiff,

middle-aged, jerky man, with red whiskers, who was reading at the window, turned, bowed, and pointed in a cold, repulsive way to a chair with its back to the door.

"I have come, your lordship," he began, uneasily, for he felt how much might depend on that interview.

"You are mistaken, sir," said the gentleman with the cassock waistcoat; "I am only his lordship's examining chaplain. I presumed you were Mr Penrose, of ——"

"My name is Trevena—I really beg your pardon," stammered the curate. "I came by appointment."

"And I am very glad to see you, Mr. Trevena," said a voice at the door.

It was the bishop; he advanced and held out one finger, to meet Mr. Trevena's brusque hand.

"Mr. Starker, please to go into the cedar-room, and read those papers I was speaking to you about—I have a little business with Mr. Trevena here."

The toady in the white neckcloth bowed to the ground and left the room.

The bishop was a bland, courtly man—suave in his own way, but cold as ice, proud as a Seigneur de Concy, a high of the high, and a tyrant over those who would not bend; sincere, but fond of power, and determined to surrender no jot of position or prerogative. For the gentlemen

Christians of his own way of thinking, the bishop was perfect; but it needed other men for the pest-house, the alley, the workhouse, the fever hospital, and the poor man's death-bed. The bishop was, in fact, merely an English nobleman, with a silk apron on, and would no more have borne advice or difference of opinion in a curate, than our friend Hookem would have done from one of his parasites.

With that accuracy and easy movement, as if learned at drill, so graceful and becoming in the English gentleman, the bishop thrust his white soft hand under a litter of sermons and purple-covered pamphlets, at last drew out one, opened it, and began to read.

"May I ask you, Mr. Trevena, if this satire is your writing, as I am told it is, and if these are your opinions? I wish to encourage my clergy to copy their Divine Master, and to go about and judge for myself, without listening to the reports and slanderous tattle of mischievous eavesdroppers. I wish to become personally acquainted with the life, character, and the parochial wants of the humblest curate in my diocese. Without this I must be to my clergy only as a distant absentee landlord, taking my rents, and returning no equivalent."

"That is my writing, my lord—I cannot deny it," said Mr. Trevena, quietly, but not in a cowed way.

"I am sorry to hear it. What are your opinions, may I ask, on predestination? I should like to

hear the opinions of so eminent a writer upon that important point."

What deadly poison may be kneaded up with honey! The bishop had hold of the tooth, the wrench must soon come. But, unfortunately for the bishop, when he was at Oxford, five-and-twenty years before, he had been as low as he was now high.

"My opinions on that point," said Mr. Trevena, gravely, and looking unflinchingly at the bishop, "are exactly those that your lordship so eloquently defended when I had the great pleasure of listening to you at St. Mary's, the last year I was at Oxford."

The bishop coloured. It was a palpable hit, the foil had left its chalk-mark on the very centre of the bishop's breast.

"I find in this rather unwise satire of yours some very doubtful and detracting remarks on that sublime blending of theology and religion, the Athanasian Creed. Do you?—what is?—how would you?—in what light, I mean, do you hold, Mr. Trevena, this great intellectual protest of theology against error?"

"That was the very point on which I have been so long anxious to consult your lordship, and to benefit by your profound scholarship."

Talleyrand himself could not have invented a more graceful evasion, or a more subtle flattery, honest and sincere as it was.

The bishop smiled all over his face, and launched

into a sea of theology. The creed refuted the errors of Arius, Sabellius, Nestorius, and Apollinaris—all the bishop said went to prove that the Church formularies were dogmatic.

Trevena listened and doubted, but his manner was so frank, gentlemanly, and honestly flattering, that the bishop relented, and looked upon him as an easy conquest to Jesuitical logic.

"You do not," said the bishop, smiling, "I know, agree with me on the question of Retreats. This I cannot complain of, though I think such periodical retirements would replenish the springs of our spiritual life, and strengthen our powers of sympathy with the objects of faith. I should like you to read what Bellarmine says on this point."

"I should be only too delighted," said Mr. Trevena, "for I have but few books. Still, your lordship, I must confess that I have thought that weak men once there might feel reluctance to plunge again into the troubles of the world; and that, even if they did, their flocks would suffer more by their absence than their pastors could gain by their retirement."

"I am of quite a different opinion," said the bishop, "I consider no state of life could be devised more adapted for the soul's health; but I rely on your candour to re-consider the arguments in favour of these institutions, and I think they will affect your mind, as they have certainly done mine."

There was a moment's silence, and the bishop

touched the ebony handle of a bell. Instantly the door opened, and a footman appeared. At this apparently palpable hint, Mr. Trevena rose to take leave.

"No, you must stay and have luncheon, Mr. Trevena," said the bishop. "I only rang to send some letters to the post."

Mr. Trevena excused himself, with many thanks, on the plea that he should miss his train.

"That is a business plea," said the bishop; "I cannot oppose. Good morning, then. God in his great goodness guide you to the right! Good morning. Linfoot, when you have shown Mr. Trevena out, tell Mr. Starker I am disengaged."

The following night, at his own fireside, Mr. and Miss Trevena sat together discussing the interview.

"John," said Miss Trevena, "for once in your life you showed some practical shrewdness. I do not quite despair of your preferment yet. You certainly managed the bishop very cleverly."

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

